

Evaluation of the People, Land and Water Program Initiative

Final report

SUBMITTED TO THE EVALUATION UNIT, IDRC, OTTAWA

P.N.Bradley

Hull University, UK

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Executive Summary

Context

The long-term goal of the PLaW PI has been to promote the equitable, sustainable and productive utilisation of natural resources by rural people in the fragile ecosystems of Africa and the Middle East. Its three key objectives were established at the outset: (1) to understand the social and biophysical base of rural production systems, including factors leading to degradation and improvement; (2) to engage in policy and institution building in order to manage conflicts and promote equitable access to resources; and (3) to develop and use communication and information strategies to further the above. It has approached this through an emphasis on integrated natural resource management.

The PLaW PI's origins can be traced back to the restructuring of earlier Divisions in the mid-1990s. Three project clusters under the ENR umbrella were inherited from these Divisions and formed the basis of the PLaW PI : Desertification, Dryland Water Management and Sustainable Production Systems and Policies. These three themes were strongly, though not exclusively, associated with the regional centres: WARO in Dakar, MERO in Cairo and the southern and East African regional offices in Johannesburg and Nairobi, later merged into ESARO in Nairobi.

During its two phases, 1996-2000 and 2000-2004, the PLaW PI supported a range of partners who conducted research into NRM systems in three ecoregions: semi-arid lands, tropical highlands and sub-humid lands. These partners and their projects have been managed from the regional centres and Ottawa.

During its 8 years of operation, the PLaW PI has undergone a number of changes and has been affected by several changes to its make-up, amongst which the gradual reduction in the number of programming staff and the closure of the ROSA are notable. These should be taken into account in considering its progress. During this period, PLaW received modified and new guidance from the centre to enhance its initial remit; to emphasise policy aspects and to incorporate cross-cutting issues such as gender and stakeholder analysis.

Methods used in the evaluation

The evidential material for this evaluation has been drawn from both programme and project level data sources. It has included a range of documentation, from the programme level itself (prospectus, work plans, PI progress reports, evaluation reports, minutes of meeting), from projects (evaluation reports, research reports, case notes from IDRC, policy and other outputs from a range of paper-based and electronic), and has been cross-checked and augmented through a series of interviews – with PLaW and associated IDRC staff in Ottawa, Nairobi, Cairo and Dakar; and with partners in Kenya, Uganda, Senegal, South Africa and Egypt.

Discussions with IDRC staff concerned the history and development of the PLaW PI itself, plus selected references to projects and partners. Interviews of partner staff concerned the evolution of their own projects and the role that PLaW had played in their development.

The selection of projects was based on region, level (field-based, networks, higher-level institutions), duration of support, size and subject matter. Intensity of investigations ranged from documentary work with assistance from relevant PLaW PO, through interviews with one or more associated staff, to field visits.

Additional interviews with linked professionals (from IDRC, RELMA, Rockefeller Foundation, Nile Basin Initiative, etc.) were also conducted.

Overall assessment

In the light of this history, the PLaW PI's achievements are notable. It has put together and managed a range of projects and associated activities across the continent and the Middle East, addressing all three of its objectives, to varying degrees and with differential emphasis. It has paid particular

attention to building capacity, often over several cycles of support and most notably in national research institutes (NARs). In this way long-lasting expertise and capability has been embedded in development research centres across a number of countries.

In pursuing an NRM agenda for sustainable and equitable development, PLaW has created an imaginative diversity of project types, including field-level CBNRM approaches, networks for advocacy, policy change and information exchange, and higher level institutional support. Some projects are locally-bounded and spatially concentrated (such as the EWEM); others have a much broader geographical reach and incorporate a mix of elements (AHI). The work of the programming staff, including the manner in which team work is facilitated through team retreats and joint approval of projects, has ensured that the project portfolio is not an eclectic mix of projects lacking a core rationale. Although not immediately evident, there is an underlying consistency of approach adopted across this wide range of activities. PLaW has come to a coherent whole with a well-articulated set of projects. Given the dispersed nature of the PLaW PI (three regional centres and the Ottawa HQ) the programming team has come together as a cohesive unit, with a common vision and purpose.

In general, projects and partners are well supported through a structured progression from bio-physical science, through social science to participation and policy engagement. This has been effective in developing multi-disciplinary approaches to resource management. Continuity of support is evident and has contributed to capacity-building, particularly in the NARs. This has been a major achievement of the PI. The duration of support for partners has, in some cases, extended to three cycles. This has been questioned. Two cycles have been suggested as a maximum. Whilst for NGOs, such a limit might seem appropriate, for permanent national institutions, where it is highly desirable to ensure that new approaches (multi-disciplinarity, gender and stakeholder analysis, participation and communication) are deeply embedded, longer term support may be warranted.

In answer to the Phase 1 review and guidelines from the centre, policy engagement has become a more central concern in the second phase. There has been a clear effort to deal with policy issues, to close the loop and to scale up. There are a number of successes to note in this regard (AHI, NARO, WMD, etc.).

Suggestions to enhance the PI

1. Whilst the evaluation acknowledges the underlying coherence of the PLaW PI, this has been gained through a lengthy process of coalescence (of project orientation), team meetings and shared responsibility for project vetting and management (perhaps less so the latter). These gains are important and the way in which they have been achieved should be noted. For the new PI, with an even wider geographical reach, bringing the team together and deriving a common vision and purpose may be even more difficult to realize without deliberate planning. The role of team retreats, based around field projects, bringing different experiences and disciplines to bear on the same problematique, is a recognized way to foster such a vision. There is a risk (with such a dispersed programming team across three continents) that the cost of working in this way may seem excessive, but without a concerted effort, it will be difficult for the new team to converge around a common vision and approach.
2. Although the greater attention to **policy** concerns in phase 2 is noted, the possibility of a more concerted and structured approach might be considered. Whilst individual projects are encouraged to embrace their own policy concerns, there appears to be no structured approach to policy at the program level. Developing capacity to map policy constituencies and their power relations and to find points of entry would assist relatively inexperienced partners such as EWEM. Such analytical and capacity building support might be best deployed at a supra-project level (much as WARF and CDS currently provide participatory and training skills), which could enhance capacity and direction in this regard. In this context it is important to recognize that policy inputs are best made from a sound field-grounded evidential base.
3. Greater attention to broad **external** factors and trends (e.g. resource privatisation, trade liberalisation and market integration, bio-technology, demographic change including rural-urban

migration) that impact on community-based NRM work may be desirable. Time and resources would need to be devoted to this ‘foresight’ thinking, which can help to ensure that IDRC/PLaW remains at the cusp of innovation and progressive work. Because of the scale and mode of its operations, the PLAAS/CASS project in southern Africa is more aware of these external dimensions than the field-based projects. The connections with academe is also instrumental. Some linkages between academic partners and the more development-oriented NARs might be useful.

4. The role of **south-south exchanges** and other forms of non-PO support to partners could usefully be considered here. This is already taking place within the PLaW, most notably through WaDiMena, but also through West Africa through the PDC channel and elsewhere via the Isang Bagsak ‘network’. In a different manner, ECAPAPA, ASERECA and OSSREA (and WARF and CDS) have also been conceived as playing a south-south support role. Broader capacity-building measures such as these would alleviate a programming team which in some respects is already over-stretched. These types of south-south exchanges could usefully be encouraged, perhaps in a more deliberate and planned manner.
5. Since the closure of ROSA, project work in southern Africa has been reduced. If this region is to regain its earlier prominence as a focus for project activity, especially in the case of transition in Zimbabwe, extra programming support for ESARO might be considered.
6. On the substantive front, particularly with respect to cross-cutting issues, efforts have been made to address the **gender** question. Whilst its importance is recognised, there is still an uncertainty about how gender issues may be best confronted. This is as much an issue of conceptualisation as of the need for appropriate methodologies and ‘toolkits’.
7. The communications and **dissemination strategy** of PLaW is still not clear. At the project level (through my discussions with partners), IDRC rather than PLaW is the ‘trademark’. In this respect, PLaW – rather than IDRC – appears to have little purchase within projects. If IDRC wishes to give individual PIs an identity that is recognised by their constituencies (in contrast to IDRC itself), a concerted strategy on output forms and style is needed. Such an identity could also be instrumental in welding the new PI together.

Terms of Reference

The Program Initiative: People Land and Water was inaugurated in 1996 and has progressed through two phases (1996-2000; 2000-2004). Its geographical reach covers the whole of Africa and the Middle East. Its goal is to promote the “... *the equitable, sustainable and productive utilization of land and water resources by men and women in stressed ecoregions of Africa and the Middle east in order to enhance their income, food and water security.*” PLaW Prospectus, 1997. This was to be achieved through the support of research programmes which adopt a multidisciplinary approach and address the three objectives of understanding internal and external factors which affect the management and productive use of natural resources; paying attention to policy and institutional arrangements which mediate this use; and developing and using communication strategies that foster development.

The first phase of the PLaW PI was evaluated in 1999 (Mackenzie and Spendjian, 1999). A second evaluation, completed in 2003 was subsequently not accepted. This final evaluation addresses not only the second phase, but also the whole of the PLaW Program Initiative. The full terms of reference are shown in Annex 5. In essence the task was to: (a) document the story of the PLaW PI, to establish what it set out to, how this was done and with what results; (b) to examine the internal coherence of the CBNRM approach adopted (paying particular attention to multi-disciplinarity); and, (c) to document and assess the PI's outreach, focussing on dissemination and communication of results and the extent of policy engagement.

Within this remit and following an interim report, particular attention has been paid to the coherence of the PI, its engagement with policy, the extent to which it is cognisant of external factors and some forward thinking about the new consolidated PI (Rural Poverty and Environment} which will supersede PLaW.

Methods

This is a program review. It looks beyond individual projects to focus on how the PLaW PI, as a whole, is performing. I draw from both program and project level data sources, and seek to triangulate the data from multiple sources, to answer the review objectives. The sources include:

Review of program and project documentation: including (a) the prospectus, work plans, PI progress reports, evaluation reports, minutes of meeting; (b) project abstracts; (c) Project Completion Reports; (d) report from the previous external review, if any; (e) individual project outputs; and (e) other key documents recommended by the team.

Interviews with program team members and external partners. In identifying and contacting partners, I have endeavoured to ensure that no undue hardship has been placed on partners as a result of participating in the review.

Where possible the responses from individuals (including programme, project and other partner staff) in the course of focussed discussions have been triangulated against the range of documentation, and through discussions of the same topics with staff from partner agencies and other IDRC PLaW staff.

Three Regional Offices as well as the IDRC centre in Ottawa have been visited. The following personnel were interviewed:

Ottawa (8th–15th November)

Guy Bessette, David Brooks, Simon Carter, Renaud De Plaen, Jean Lebel, Wardie Leppan, Zsafia Orosz, Eva Rathgeber.

The purpose of the Ottawa interviews was to discuss the origins and development of the PLaW PI and to document its history. Individual projects, except where they illuminated the PLaW PI evolution, were not discussed at this stage.

Nairobi (15th–18th August; 24th–29th August; 7th–11th December)

Luis Navarro (Team Leader, PLaW), Connie Freeman (RD), Edith Adera (Team Leader, ACACIA), Kevin Kelpin (Evaluation Unit, Ottawa), Maureen Nakirunda (Research Officer, PLaW), Joseph Mambo (Administrative Officer)

Here interviews ranged across a number of subject areas, including further discussions on the history of the PLaW PI and on specific elements (dissemination and outreach, administration) and focussed discussions on individual projects.

In addition interviews with IDRC partners were conducted, with John Lynam (Rockefeller) and Chin Ong (RELMA) and with project leaders and their staff: **Elangata Wuas, Environmental Management III** (100652) – Fred Odera, Tom Ochuodho, Meshack Malo (NMK) and **Tissue Culture Banana for Smallholders** (Kenya) (055190) – Samuel Wakhusama (ASAAA).

These were largely concerned with individual projects or with institutional and other linkages between IDRC and partner agencies and donors in East Africa.

Uganda: (13th–17th December)

Interviews were also arranged with the following partners in Uganda: **AHI** – Dr. Ann Stroud (Co-ordinator), **ASARECA** – Dr. Seyfu Ketema (Executive Secretary), Jacqueline Nyagahima (Program Assistant, RAIN), Clesensio Tizakara (CGS-Research Manager), Howard Elliott (Senior Technical Advisor), **ECAPAPA** – Isaac Minde (Co-ordinator), **NARO** – Dr. Otim Nape (Director General), Regina Musaaazi (Research Officer), Diana Okullo (Research Officer), **NARO, Kawanda** – Dr. Wilberforce Tushemerirwe, **Nile Basin Initiative** – Dr. Patrick Kahangire (Executive Director)

Discussions centred on the development of these projects through their successive cycles, the relationship between them and the PLaW PI team and any changes in approaches, outputs, outcomes and impacts that these partners have undergone as a result.

Dakar (2nd–5th December)

Interviews with Innocent Butare to discuss PLaW's presence and history in West Africa and with two partners about their projects: **West African Rural Foundation** (000235, 100379) (Fadel Diame, Director and staff), **Crop-Livestock integration for sustainable natural resources management in the Sahel, the sub-humid and highland zones of West and Central Africa** (100020, 100233, 101631, 102234) (Jean Sibiri Zoundi, project manager).

Cairo (2nd–5th January)

Interviews with Lamia El Fattal and Eglal Rached on PLaW presence and history in the Near East and North Africa and with two partners about their projects: **Water Demand Management project/program** (Lorra Thompson, Co-ordinator), **Centre for Development Services** (Ali Mokhtar, Eng. Ahmed Farouk and Mohamed Ahmed Ramzy)

Cape Town (30th–31st August)

The **New approaches to people-centred natural resource management for development in southern Africa** project (PLAAS/CASS) (003989, 101807) was discussed with Ben Cousins, Frank Matose and Webster Whande.

Projects considered

A number of projects were considered in varying levels of detail, including field-site visits, full discussions with project team members and an extensive analysis of associated documentation (Table 1).

Table 1 Projects examined for the PLaW PI review

| <i>Project ID</i> | <i>Partner</i> | <i>Project Title</i> | <i>Data sources</i> |
|----------------------------|--|--|---|
| 100652 | NMK | Elangata Wuas, Environmental Management III | Field visit, interview with partner, documentation, interview with responsible PO |
| 055190 | ISAAA | Tissue Culture Banana for Smallholders (Kenya) | Interview with partner, documentation, interview with responsible PO |
| 003989, 101807 | PLAAS/ CASS | New approaches to people-centred natural resource management for development in southern Africa (PLAAS and CASS) | Interview with partner, documentation, interview with responsible PO |
| 101082 | IUCN | Southern African Program for Improved Trans-Boundary Natural Resources Management | Documentation, interview with responsible PO |
| 055359, 101592 | AHI | African Highland Resource Management | Interview with partner, documentation, interview with responsible PO |
| 001496 ... 102252 | NARO | Series of banana-related projects with NARO | Interview with partner, documentation, interview with responsible PO |
| 101621 | ECAPAP A | Capacity Strengthening in Managing Conflicts in Natural Resource Management and Use in E,C and S. Africa (ECAPAPA II) | Interview with partner, documentation, interview with responsible PO |
| 055024 | ASARE CA | ECA Program on Agricultural Policy Analysis (ASARECA) | Interview with partner, documentation, interview with responsible PO |
| 101744 | OSSREA | Capacity building for Social and Gender Analysis in NRM focused Research for Development (OSSREA II) | Documentation, interview with responsible PO |
| 100379 | WARF | West African Rural Foundation | Interview with partner, documentation, interview with responsible PO |
| 101631 and associated RSPs | INERA (Burkina Faso), INRA (Niger), IER (Mali) | Crop-Livestock integration for sustainable natural resources management in the sub-humid and highland zones of West and Central Africa | Interview with partner, documentation, interview with responsible PO |
| 101196 | ISRA (Senegal) | Améliorer la gestion paysanne des aménagements hydro-agricoles (CORAF) | Documentation, interview with responsible PO |
| 060025, 101806, RSPs | IDRC | Water Demand Initiative-WaDiMena | Interview with partner, documentation, interview with responsible PO |
| 51802-500 | CDS | Agro-ecology around Lake Nasser | Interview with partner |

All of these projects show one or more of the following characteristics:

1. Multi-faceted field-based projects with multi-disciplinary teams, adopting an inter-disciplinary approach which incorporates environmental concerns, social-equity issues, improved technologies (with the exception of 101807), and thus dovetails with a large number of PLaW criteria.
2. Major institutional support projects, developing skills in key cross-cutting elements such as participatory approaches, gender and stakeholder analysis, policy research or policy constituency building.
3. Major capacity-building projects, stretched over several cycles and intended to build a critical mass of researchers with combined biophysical and social research skills, thinking in an interdisciplinary fashion.
4. Policy engagement.
5. Building networks or constituencies; communities of practice.

The criteria for selection included these four elements, but were also constrained by practical issues (time and resources). As a consequence, PDC projects have received less attention than would be desirable. The core of these projects lies in West Africa, where direct contact with PLaW's partners was limited. These caveats should be born in mind when considering comments on this aspect of PLaW's work. The selection of projects was supported by the PLaW team leader, and POs in Dakar and Cairo, who were made aware of the range of issues to be covered.

The purpose of project analysis was to enrich the evaluation of the PLaW PI as a whole. There is no intention here to address or evaluate the projects themselves.

Structure of the report

The report begins with a brief description of the terms of reference and the methodology adopted. This is followed by a short overview of the PLaW PI, which then leads to a fuller account of the PLaW's history. In this I have drawn attention to the manner in which its chief characteristics have emerged, paying particular attention to its founding conditions and some disjunctions which accompanied its development. Some detail is added concerning staff changes, the mode of operation, the distinctive features of the PLaW and what has been achieved.

The evaluation then turns to a series of key issues.

The first is a discussion of the coherence of the programme, taking evidence from the portfolio and its analysis, from documents and from discussions with programming staff and partners.

A second theme is a consideration of the extent to which the program and its partners have dealt with policy and outreach, key concerns for the PLaW, particularly during its second phase. Both case studies and general observations are included in this section.

I have also commented on the work of PLaW in terms of broader external (to its project activities) trends and forces which impact on its work. Following this commentary, there is a short section dealing with PLaW's capacity building experience.

The conclusions briefly summarise the history of the PLaW PI, noting its major achievements; and then consider a range of issues that emerge from this analysis, including some suggestions about future possibilities.

Throughout this analysis I have drawn upon material from projects to flesh out some of the key issues: adherence to objectives, coherence, policy, dissemination and outreach. A number of projects have been considered, some in greater detail than others. This evidence has been based on discussions with both partners and their program officers and on a reading of documentary material. For reasons of confidentiality, I do not refer to specific interviews or persons. However, for the most part, the conclusions that are drawn are based on detailed notes of interviews and my interpretation of the thrust of these discussions. Where possible, I have triangulated these impressions with parallel interviews and further checking of documents.

The PLaW PI – Overview

Objectives of the PLaW PI

According to Board paper BG2000 (06)17 the PLaW PI objectives are as follows:

1. To enhance understanding and knowledge to manage the systematic and external factors that lead to degradation or improvement in the productive and service capacity of land and water resources (bio-physical and socio-economic factors)
2. To contribute to local and national policies and institutional arrangements that, by managing intrinsic conflicts, equitably increase access, availability and the quality of land and water resources.
3. To develop or use communication strategies that facilitate the exchange of information and knowledge among stakeholders and foster participation in development initiatives.

Two phases of operation

The PLaW PI “... *interpreted and followed ENRM as a general area of mandate and delivery but as a component of the wider IDRC work responsibility, which also included SEE (Society, Economy and Equity) and ICT4D (Information Communication Technology for Development).*” (Navarro, 2004, 2)

The ENRM ‘umbrella’ incorporated PLaW, CBNRM-Asia, MINGA as well as SUB (Sustainable Use of Biodiversity), CFP (City Feeding People) and Ecohealth.

Phase 1 (1996-2000) of the PLaW PI began in October 1996. It came about through a merger of three PIs/clusters under the NRM Program Area umbrella: Desertification, Dryland Water Management and Sustainable Production Systems and Policies. Its geographical focus was and remains the whole of Africa and the Middle East. Its objectives, approaches and a three year work plan were agreed following meetings in Ottawa (October 1996) and Kabale, Uganda (January 1997). At this latter meeting, agreement on the program was reached within the team and with outside advice from the AHI, Ugandan and international researchers, NGOs and, IDRC’s Gender and Sustainable Development Unit (PLaW PI Prospectus 1997-2000, 1997, page 1). Towards the end of Phase 1 a review was commissioned which broadly supported the activities of the PI and suggested greater emphasis on policy, which, because of the contested nature of resource use, would involve work on conflict resolution.

Phase 2 (2000-2004) was built upon the foundation established during the first period, on further guidance from the centre (cross-cutting issues such as gender and stakeholder analysis, greater attention to policy outcomes, conflict resolution, scaling up and closing the loop). New projects were developed which were more closely aligned with PLaW’s objectives. The influence of the pre-PLaW period diminished. This period also saw a reduction in the number of staff devoted to the PI.

The PLaW PI today

At the current time – the end of Phase 2, the PLaW PI consists of a range of project support activities centred on the three regional offices (Nairobi, Dakar and Cairo) with additional programming inputs from Ottawa. In general, the more substantive projects receive long-term support (6 years or more) in order to develop capacity and to approach the three PLaW objectives in a progressive manner. Throughout the PLaW’s history, it has received modified and new guidance from the centre to enhance its initial remit; to emphasise policy aspects and to incorporate such cross-cutting issues as gender and stakeholder analysis. The character of the PI can best be summarised by a brief overview of a selection of its projects. These highlight the key issues of natural resource management research through a multidisciplinary lens, featuring the technical and bio-physical aspects of resource use, the social system through which these technical practices are mediated and the external policy environment in which they are constrained or facilitated. Participatory approaches are deployed to ensure community involvement:

Focus on objectives 1 and 2

- Elangata Wuas, Environmental Management III. Emphasis on capacity building in a new(ish) research group, including participation, community-based NRM, equity and gender awareness, with stakeholder analysis and policy engagement.
- Senegal Valley irrigation. At a relatively early stage of IDRC support cycle, with a NAR-base research team yet to grasp full social dimensions and full awareness of stakeholder interests and power.
- Crop-livestock interactions in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger across a series of agro-ecological zones, with participatory research and technology development. This project has addressed policy issues and is currently ‘closing the loop’ with workshops, conferences and multi-media output. Project reports and interviews show evidence of productive impact. The project has gone through 2 phases of IDRC support.
- Banana cultivation and Natural Resource Management in Uganda and Tanzania. Emerging through a sustained period of support for a NAR (NARO), to expand capacity, instil multi-disciplinarity and recognition of social and economic dimensions of problem. Several PLaW program staff have been involved and objectives 1, 2 and 3 have been addressed.
- NARO support is also evident through the AHI, a multi-centred project supporting NARs in several countries in East Africa with technology development components for improved NRM and agricultural production. It has links with ACACIA in supporting extension and input provision. Research has progressed from NAR research centres to on-farm research to the watershed scale, with participation and an extension strategy built in. This project is part of an on-going, long-term process to support a major IARC backed initiative in East Africa.

Focus on objectives 2 and 3

- Alongside field-based research projects, the PLaW PI also supports institution-building projects which pay more attention to its second two objectives. These include ASARECA, ECAPAPA, OSSREA, WARF, CDS and PLAAS/CASS. In various ways these projects are setting research and policy agendas, creating centres of excellence, where key skills are developed and made available to other projects (both within and without the PLaW orbit): gender and social analysis, participatory approaches, outcome mapping, etc.
- The water demand management network in the Middle East and North Africa also addresses these latter objectives, but is distinct in that it is essentially a ‘corporate’ project, run and managed through IDRC itself rather than through an external partner.
- Objective 3 is especially addressed through a series of projects which highlight Participatory Development Communication (PDC). These are championed by the PO operating out of Ottawa and have constituted both stand-alone projects and those which are complementary and supportive of PLaW-supported projects which focus more on objectives 1 and 2 (e.g. the banana support work in Uganda, the CDS work in Egypt and the Middle East)

This selection therefore gives an overall flavour of how the PLaW PI goes about its work in addressing its goals and objectives.

Structure of the program and its evolution

The PLaW PI emerged from earlier pre-1992 (Stage 1) Divisions: Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Science (AFNS), Health (H), Social Science (SS), Earth and Engineering Sciences (EE) and Communications (CD). Cost reductions in 1992 led to break up and reconstruction of these Divisions into Environment and Natural Resources – derived from components of AFNS and SS and some small elements of SS (ENR), Social Science (SS) and Communications (CD). These lasted from 1992 - 1995. In 1995 further budget cuts lead to a reduction in senior management staff and involved a complete restructuring – from Divisions to Program Initiatives (PIs). This restructuring was motivated by the need to reduce costs and by the desire of the centre to reorganise a difficult-to-manage portfolio

of disconnected activities. Three project clusters under ENR: Desertification, Dryland Water Management and Sustainable Production Systems and Policies were merged in 1996 to form the PLaW PI. The PI was staffed by 12 senior programming staff in 1996 (PO level or higher) whose time allocation to the PI varied from 25% to 65%. By 2004, this number had declined to 5, with allocations from 30% to 100%. Throughout this 8 year period, PLaW was perhaps distinct from other PIs in its mode of operation, whereby the majority of programming staff were located in but, in addition, were spread across four (later three) regional offices in Africa and the Middle East (particularly in Phase 2), as well as in Ottawa. These regional offices were, to some extent, closely tied to the three thematic foci of the program: water demand management (MERO), desertification (WARO) and sustainable production and policies (ESARO).

The PLaW PI – History

This account of the history of the PLaW PI is based on key PLaW documents and interviews with the majority of POs who have been associated with it (Annex 4). These have taken place in Nairobi, Ottawa, Dakar and Cairo.

The PLaW PI was officially constituted in October 1996 (PLaW PI Prospectus 1997-2000, 1997). It resulted from the merger of three program clusters under the ENRM Program Area umbrella: Desertification, Dryland Water Management and Sustainable Production Systems and Policies. The ENR umbrella not only incorporated PLaW, but also CBNRM-Asia, MINGA as well as SUB (Sustainable Use of Biodiversity), CFP (City Feeding People) and Ecohealth.

Prior to this point, the three ENRM program clusters had emerged from the restructuring of earlier pre-1992 Divisions: Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Science, Health, Social Science, Earth and Engineering and Communications.

Budget cuts in 1992 led to the restructuring of these Divisions. Thus from 1992 - 1995, stage 2 Divisions were: Environment and Natural Resources – derived from environmental components of AFNS and SS (energy and policy elements), Social Science and Communications.

In 1995 further resource constraints led to a reduction of middle management staff and a ‘hollowing out’ of the chain of command from Vice-President to Program Officers. It (and the previous changes in 1992) involved a complete restructuring – from Divisions to Program Initiatives (PIs). In the case of the PLaW PI this restructuring and its associated reduction in middle management may have been instrumental in leading to the perception of a disjunction between program activities in the field and what central management perceived the PI to be. In effect, management control was devolved to the PO level, creating a flat structure within which POs had a high degree of autonomy in shaping the program. PIs in general were allowed to set their own programming priorities and objectives; and to develop approaches and a *modus operandi* on their own. In the case of the PLaW PI, much of this was constrained by the legacy of previous program areas (Desertification, Dryland Water Management and Sustainable Production Systems and Policies) and the heritage of the team members who became the new programming team. Concepts, approaches and existing partners were brought across into the new PI, even from as far back as the AFNS, SS and ENR divisions (Navarro, 2004).

Thus, as it emerged from the previous program areas and divisions, the new PLaW PI inherited a broad range of projects, some of which were carried over into the prospectus for its first phase (1997-2000). This assortment of projects (some of which trace their origins back to the pre-1992 Divisions), when grouped together, created an eclectic mix without obvious coherence. Some of these projects came to an end during Phase 1 (for example, 065000 – Régénération des plantations de *Casuarina equisetifolia* (Filao) sur le littoral nord du Sénégal; 002246 – Biocontrol of *Striga* (McGill/West Africa) II). Others metamorphosed into new projects which continued throughout much of the subsequent life of the PLaW PI (for example, 001496 – Goldfinger, cooking bananas and plantains: testing and dissemination, which led to a series of capacity building and NRM projects in Uganda,

centred on banana production; or 000233 – West African Rural Foundation, which continued for several more years).

In all of this the PLaW programming team endeavoured to bring together a very broad range of projects, spread over a very extended geographical space (from the far south of South Africa to North Africa and the Middle East and from West to East Africa) into a whole – through which to characterise the PI.

Whilst this dynamic was unfolding, successive guidance from the centre suggested an enlargement of approaches rather than a deeper focus. Following the initial broad direction at the inception of the PI system, additional guidance on SED, accentuating ‘empowerment through knowledge’ led to “*a wide framework to define objectives and approaches*” (Navarro, 2004:2). There followed further advice on particular themes or elements: stakeholder analysis, gender, building the pyramid, closing the loop (CTL), Rx, objectivity and accountability. All of these needed to be embedded into a PI that was still preoccupied with defining and internalising a core identity and consistent thrust to its programming. CTL received particularly attention, subsequently emerging as a strong signal in the latter years of the PI.

According to Navarro (2004) whilst this guidance was intended to assist in the development of consistency or uniformity across the different PIs, in the case of the PLaW, it distracted rather than enlightened the PI in its search for consolidation. It may also have reflected a desire by the centre to re-assert managerial control following the ‘loosening up’ of the PI supervision during the 1995 restructuring.

PHASE 1

The early PLaW was characterised by a very experienced team, whose members carried over their work from previous divisions and program areas. In this respect, little changed at the onset of PLaW Phase1. In other words a ‘new’ team did not emerge with the designation of PLaW. Moreover, POs were spread across four regional offices as well as the centre in Ottawa. Team building around a new PI was therefore constrained by physical distance/separation.

From 1996 through to 2000, the first phase of the PLaW PI was characterised by a project portfolio which broadly reflected the thematic interests of staff and of their regional foci. The strategy was to build on previous work (including existing partnerships). Initially, three Special Initiatives (SIs) were undertaken: Water Demand Management, the Water Hyacinth Information Partnership and the Local Management of Natural Resources network. The first of these subsequently emerged as major thrust of the PI (particularly through the WaDiMena project and its antecedents); the second came to a conclusion during the middle period and the last continues through the PLAAS/CASS work in southern Africa. A focus on policy-research linkage and associated policy influence (presaging the later emphasis on CTL) was considered as another SI, but was not pursued at this early stage.

In other respects, ideas, projects and programming staff rolled over from Desertification, Water Demand Management and Sustainable Production Systems and Policies, initially without substantial change. Thus, there were a series of projects dealing with **Water Demand Management**, water policy and pricing, traditional water management and other aspects of water in Egypt, Lebanon, Israel-Palestine, Jordan, Yemen, Eritrea, Syria and the Maghreb. With the exception of one project focussed on southern Africa, these were centred in the Middle East and North Africa and largely based at MERO¹:

1994/1995 060039 Gestion de la demande de l'eau, Tunisie

¹ Subsequent project lists are included to reveal the flavour of the project portfolio at the regional office level. Projects have been included to reflect the emphases in the accompanying text rather than to present a complete listing.

| | | |
|-----------|--------|---|
| 1994/1995 | 002627 | Sustainable improvement of marginal lands in Lebanon: IRSAL case study |
| 1995/1996 | 002382 | Joint Israeli-Palestinian Management of the Mountain Aquifer II |
| 1998/1999 | 004099 | Joint Israeli-Palestinian Management of the Mountain Aquifer - Phase III (Simulation Modelling for Decision Makers) |
| 1995/1996 | 060011 | The Submarine Springs in the Chekka Bay, Lebanon: Delineation of Salient Features |
| 1996/1997 | 060001 | Supplemental Irrigation With Brackish Water in Syria (96-8604) |
| 1996/1997 | 002877 | Preliminary Study on Water Tariff Policy for Rural Eritrea |
| 1996/1997 | 002778 | Integrated Water and Wastewater (Egypt) Phase II (96-0212) |
| 1996/1997 | 003019 | Disposal of the Water Accompanying Masila Oil (Yemen) |
| 1997/1998 | 060025 | Water Demand Management Network |
| 1997/1998 | 060080 | Participatory Land and Water in Dryland Agropastoral Areas: NW Coast of Egypt (Phase II), 97-8603 |
| 1997/1998 | 004060 | Workshop on water resources management |
| 1998/1999 | 060094 | Assessment of Water Users' Associations in Egypt |
| 1998/1999 | 060077 | Policy and Technology Adoption, Tunisia, Morocco and Syria (98-8602) |
| 1998/1999 | 060107 | 7th Nile 2002 conference - Comprehensive Water Resources Development of the Nile Basin: The vision for the next century |
| 1999/2000 | 100235 | Water Pricing Policy, Willingness to Pay and Affordability in the West Bank |
| 1999/2000 | 100253 | Review of the Proceeding of the Workshop on Water Resources Management in the Islamic World, Amman, Jordan, December 1998 |
| 1999/2000 | 100295 | Water Demand Management Research Network Sponsors' Group Meeting, 22 Nov. 1999 |
| 1998/1999 | 004397 | Water Demand Management Network Development (Southern Africa) - 98-5926 |

As a second theme or element, there were a number of projects on aspects of **Desertification** and land management, largely emanating from WARO:

| | | |
|-----------|--------|--|
| 1993/1994 | 000233 | The West African Rural Foundation (WARF) Phase I |
| 1995/1996 | 002450 | Desertification: Elaboration du Programme d'Action National (Burkina Faso) |
| 1996/1997 | 003347 | Desert Margins Initiative (Africa) |
| 1997/1998 | 065131 | Elaboration du Programme d'Action National au Senegal: La Sensibilisation de la Population. 97-8150-01/02 |
| 1998/1999 | 003429 | Forging Links Between Agroforestry Research and Development in the Semi-Arid Lowlands of West Africa (SALWA) |
| 1998/1999 | 065283 | Restauration Agronomique des Sols Salés (Sénégal) |

In East and Central Africa, the emphasis was on the third theme: **Sustainable Production Systems and Policies**, with projects that were partly carried over and partly new:

| | | |
|-----------|--------|---|
| 1994/1995 | 055071 | Community Natural Resource Management & Staff Development (Mozambique) |
| 1995/1996 | 055121 | Institutional Development for Natural Resource Management (Mozambique) |
| 1995/1996 | 055127 | Victoria Lake Basin Management Research |
| 1995/1996 | 055185 | Water Hyacinth Management Capability in Africa and the Middle East |
| 1997/1998 | 055378 | Water Hyacinth Information Clearinghouse Bridging Activity |
| 1995/1996 | 001496 | Goldfinger, cooking bananas and plantains: testing and dissemination |
| 1998/1999 | 003988 | On-farm banana and natural resources management research |
| 1998/1999 | 100259 | Communication among Banana Growers to Improve Soil Management Practices |
| 1998/1999 | 100512 | CG-Classical Biological Control of Banana Weevil |
| 1998/1999 | 100649 | MD-Biotechnology to Benefit Small Scale Banana Producers in Kenya |
| 1998/1999 | 055298 | Rehabilitation of cassava production in Uganda |
| 1996/1997 | 055024 | ECA Program on Agricultural Policy Analysis (ASARECA) |

1998/1999 055359 African Highland Resource Management II

Some of these were to disappear as the PLaW PI moved into its second phase (for example, the work in Mozambique) whilst others came to a natural conclusion (the water hyacinth work and associated projects). Others, such as the banana work in Uganda, would grow and form major elements of PLaW Phase 2.

Significant amongst the mix of projects at this early stage, was a grouping from **Southern Africa**:

| | | |
|-----------|--------|---|
| 1994/1995 | 055071 | Community Natural Resource Management & Staff Development (Mozambique) |
| 1995/1996 | 055121 | Institutional Development for Natural Resource Management (Mozambique) |
| 1996/1997 | 003529 | Niassa Environmental Research and Sustainable Development Program (NERSDP) (preparatory phase) |
| 1997/1998 | 003985 | Evaluation: Working for Water Program (South Africa) - Social, Economic and Rehabilitation Studies |
| 1998/1999 | 004397 | Water Demand Management Network Development (Southern Africa) - 98-5926 |
| 1998/1999 | 004130 | Natural Resources Management in Preparation for Model Forest in Malawi |
| 1999/2000 | 100166 | Popular Version: Desertification Audit (South Africa) |
| 1999/2000 | 100369 | Developing a Regional Comparative Study on Trans-boundary Areas and Trans-frontier Conservation Areas |
| 1999/2000 | 100285 | Water Demand Management in Southern Africa: Promotion of Regional Action |

Much of this regionally-focussed activity was later to wane when the ROSA was closed, though the trans-boundary and the WDM work has been maintained.

1999 REVIEW OF THE PLAW PI

Towards the end of Phase 1, a review of the PI was commissioned. This review (Mackenzie and Spendjian, 1999) made the following points:

- General approval of the direction of the PI;
- Program has coherence beyond the aggregation of prior and new projects;
- Endorsement of placing food and water security within a framework that emphasises access to resources and the importance accorded to systemic and external factors;
- Recognition of accomplishments; and
- Greater attention to outreach and impacts as programming criteria needed.

The last was voiced in the context of policy engagement and the recognition that access to resources is always a politically contested arena, particularly when the focus shifts from technological development to community-based action and participation. Conflict resolution was mentioned as a topic worthy of greater consideration.

The review also highlighted and approved of the rural focus of PLaW's work, but recognised the difficulty of separating rural from urban R4D, particularly in the context of water demand management. In this light the Middle East was seen as distinct from Africa, wherein the rural and urban interface would increasingly feature in the future.

Capacity limitations in Africa were also recognised, particularly in the fields of gender and social analysis. The review noted that in supporting strong partners, these themes could be managed in-house, but if institutions with weaker capacity were funded, additional support from the PLaW PI might be needed. PLaW's prospectus for Phase 1 was not clear in confronting the choice between these alternatives.

Many of these points were addressed in the second phase of the PLaW PI.

- Gender and stakeholder analysis work was supported through OSSREA and made more explicit in guidance to existing projects/partners.
- Throughout Phase 2, policy work received greater emphasis, with all partners encouraged to address this as they progressed through technical resource management research to participatory work with host communities. The Burkina Faso team meeting in 2002 paid particular attention to this through the water conflict resolution project (Résolution des conflits d'usage des ressources en eau et communication participative pour le développement dans le bassin du fleuve Nakambé – 100844)

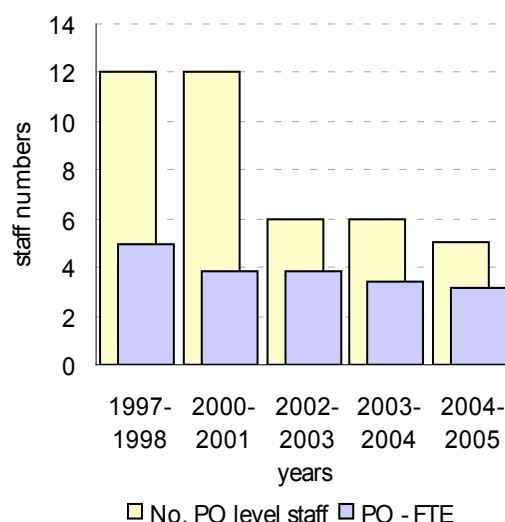
As the PLaW PI moved from Phase 1 to 2 in 2000, a number of additional changes are noted:

- Staff changes undoubtedly affected the programming team in its planning and activity. Throughout the first phase, staff levels had held approximately constant. Although 12 PO-level or higher staff are listed in the prospectus, when their time allocations to the PLaW PI are taken into account, full time equivalents reduce to 5 POs. By 2002, this had declined to 3.8, with only 7 POs actively involved. By this time, RDs were no longer involved in programming and a number of key staff had left IDRC or been transferred to other PIs. Towards the end of Phase 2, in 2004, full time equivalents had further declined to 3.2 and total active POs to 6. This represents a 36 percent reduction from Phase 1 (see

Figure 1 Changes to PLaW programming staff numbers (1997-2005)

Table 2 Decline in PLaW PO staff (1997-2005)

| | PO - FTE | % decline from 1997/8 |
|-----------|----------|-----------------------|
| 1997-1998 | 5.0 | - |
| 2000-2001 | 3.9 | 22 |
| 2002-2003 | 3.8 | 24 |
| 2004-2005 | 3.2 | 36 |



Annex 4 for details). Only 3 POs were based in the regional offices. However, it should be noted that although the total number of POs assigned to the PLaW PI declined from phase 1 to 2, those that remained (or joined) devoted more of their time to it. This is illustrated by the lesser rate of decline of FTEs compared to that of the total number of POs in Figure 1. By 2004-2005 the mean percentage of PO time devoted to PLaW had increased to 64% (compared to 41% in 1997). This greater concentration of effort may have been instrumental in building cohesion in the PI in phase 2.

- The ROSA office was closed in September 2001. Many of the projects in the region subsequently finished. A PO was expected to transfer to what was renamed ESARO (East Africa incorporating southern Africa), but this failed to materialise and new initiatives in the south became less possible or likely.
- A review of the post-1999/2000 project portfolio indicates that a greater number of projects were managed out of ESARO than the other regional officers, with a correspondingly higher allocation

of funding. This may have placed additional loads on the Nairobi-based programming staff, even more so given the closure of ROSA in 2001.

PHASE 2

The prospectus for the 2000-2003 period draws on the experiences of the first phase. It makes reference to a number of points raised in the 1999 review (Mackenzie and Spendjian, 1999): the influence of external factors (politics, economic conditions, demographic forces, etc.), which are then affected by and, in turn, influence public policy; the need to address NRM research from the perspective of the users' social and economic circumstances; the importance of economic benefits (from the development of new resource use technologies) and the role of market chains. A renewed attention to these factors was intended to ensure that research did not become too focused on the natural resources themselves.

The research focus of this second phase was to be on soil productivity and water demand management, primarily in the rural sector, and spread across four eco-regions: the arid lands of North Africa and the Middle East, the East and Central African Highlands, and the sub-humid lands of West and Southern Africa.

Projects began to coalesce around these targets and a synergy amongst the programming team becomes evident. Collaboration of the programming staff around certain themes is noted. This can be illustrated by the West African work, which benefited from the involvement of two POs in building a set of projects which had a common direction (combating desertification). These projects encompassed not only production technology research, but also participation, community involvement and communications elements.

- 100233 Intégration Agriculture-Elevage et Gestion des Ressources Naturelles (Afrique de l'Ouest)
- 100249 Communication rurale et développement durable
- 100256 Développement d'un Modèle de Communication en Fertilité des Sols chez les Femmes Paysannes au Burkina Faso
- 100832 Live Fences (Mali)
- 100844 Résolution des conflits d'usage des ressources en eau et communication participative pour le développement dans le bassin du fleuve Nakambé
- 101019 ISANG BAGSAK - A Capacity-Building & Networking Program in Participatory Development Communication for NRM Researchers & Practitioners
- 101196 Améliorer la gestion paysanne des aménagements hydro-agricoles (CORAF)
- 101338 Intégration de la communication participative dans les actions de lutte contre la désertification au Sahel (Phase II)
- 101631 Crop-Livestock integration for sustainable natural resources management in the sub-humid and highland zones of West and Central Africa
- 102443 Isang Bagsak: Co-production et diffusion des savoirs en agroforesterie au Sahel

The different experiences and skills of the POs were therefore jointly brought to bear on the region's key natural resource management problems. The process of project approval involved several POs in an extended discussion, in which proposals brought to the PI would go through several iterations. Proposal development was therefore a joint exercise between several programming staff and the partners. In this way, PLAW's objectives and approach were built into new projects from the start. Pos were therefore engaged not only in their own projects, but also in those of their colleagues. Through this, POs gained an expanded vision of their own contribution to the PI. Despite their physical separation across the different ROs, the programming team began to share a common understanding of the purpose of the PLAW PI. The newly appointed PO in the MERO encouraged an equivalent collaboration, in which the expertise of two non-MERO POs was brought to bear on water demand management issues in the Middle East and North Africa. A series of related projects came from this collaboration: PDC training in support of CDS's work with The University of Minia on Water Users'

Associations, the Lake Nasser work (now a joint Ecohealth-PLaW project) and the wider reach of the WDM network and its WaDiMena offspring. In East Africa, PDC work also enriched the projects in Uganda, where linkages between the support of NARO and the AHI begin to emerge (see below).

2003 REVIEW OF THE PLaW PI

The 2003 Evaluation of the PLaW PI (Garoute and Sow, 2003) was not well-received, being considered incomplete in its methodology and evidence base. Nevertheless it contained a number of observations which are relevant to the current review. The objectives of the review were to examine the extent to which PLaW had achieved its objectives, to document the results of its work and to gauge the strength and weaknesses of the program's thematic approach. In its main findings, it found that inter-disciplinary capacity building had progressed well; that its outputs had been copious and had changed attitudes and thinking; and judged that its thematic approach fitted well with current state of NRM thinking. It also remarked that a lot remained to be done with respect to the programming team itself, in terms of improving "real inter-disciplinarity, participatory communication and gender considerations" (p.9). As elaborated below, however, this current review finds these aspects well developed and integrated into the team's thinking and activity, but with some caveats about gender. Garoute and Sow's evaluation also noted that the documentation of the PLaW might benefit from a more standardised format and approach. It also raised the issue of broader external factors and trends, suggested that pastoralism might receive greater attention, that synergies between projects – within and across countries – should be taken advantage of and that the team leader should limit his programming and administrative work and focus more on increasing the visibility of the PI. Some of these issues are addressed below, particularly externalities and inter-project synergies.

MODE OF OPERATION

Throughout the two phases of PLaW, the development of the program and the program team has been assisted by a series of team meetings or retreats into the field. These involved project visits in the field, discussions over the prospectus and other foci and were spread across the different regions of PLaW PI's geographical reach, including Ottawa and were associated with the different themes of the PI:

1. Ottawa (October 1996) – First discussions of new PLaW program
2. Kabale (January 1997)

These two meetings shaped the first Phase of the PLaW PI, with agreement on objectives, approaches and a work plan for the next three years. The team met with NARO leaders in Kampala prior to travelling to Kabale, where objectives and approaches were discussed with the African Highlands Initiative host team formed by Ugandan and international researchers as well as NGO agents.

3. Dakar (May 1998) – No field visit
4. Ottawa (May 1999) – No field visit
5. Aleppo (April 2000) – Discussion around the prospectus for Phase II. Field visit to see ICARDA work. Representation from OSSREA
6. Cape Town (May 2001) – Field visit to LNRM sites, including Leleifontein.
7. Burkina Faso (June 2002) – Field visits, involving joint monitoring, to projects on water management and desertification. This meeting lasted 10 days and visited projects of Innocent Butare and Guy Bessette, looking at conflict resolution, participation, and aspects of a multi-disciplinarity approach. Several team members remarked that this was a highly successful

meeting, bringing the team together around the concept of multi-disciplinarity and inter-disciplinary thinking with a strong participatory element. It also provided a platform for two new POs to see how the team and the PI operated.

8. Naivasha (September 2003) – Included field visit to Elangata Wuas site
9. Ottawa (2004) – Discussion of new PI

Benefits of field-based retreats:

Bringing their own particular disciplinary perspective, team members were able to discuss the projects amongst themselves, with researchers of the project team and with members of the community. For the POs, this undoubtedly helped to bring the team together, to understand better the individual and different perspectives of their colleagues and thus to expand beyond the confines of their own particular disciplinary focus. An inter-disciplinary understanding was therefore encouraged through these field retreats. Several team members have indicated how their own intellectual development has been broadened by this process and how this has subsequently been reflected in the nature of the projects they manage. Throughout the history of the PLaW, projects have progressively become more multi-disciplinary in their approach.

Team members have also expanded their outlook as they have grown into the team. The multi-inter-disciplinary approach has now become embedded in PLaW.

Characteristics

During its 8 years of development, the PLaW PI has suffered several key **disruptions**, which have almost certainly interrupted its progress:

- Budgetary cuts and structural changes prior to the inception of the program (loss of middle management, limited consultation with program team about this change to working practices)
- Between 1997 and 2002, PLaW lacked a Research Officer in Ottawa. This may have contributed to the lack of communication between the field-based teams and the centre.
- At the ESARO in 2001, the PLaW TL was acting Regional Director during the changeover from one RD to another – at a time when many POs from different PIs were in the process of leaving. Their on-going project support work had to be covered by the TL and a reduced number of staff.
- The loss of the ROSA (the closure of this Regional Office in September 2001 led to a loss of staff and disturbance to project activities in southern Africa – this constituted a major disruption).

In addition to these breaks in continuity (which would also have affected other PIs operating in Africa), the PLaW PI was also distinctive on several other counts:

- Unlike other PIs, it was essentially a field staffed programme. Many of the key POs were stationed at the African and Middle Eastern Regional Centres. Representation in Ottawa was therefore limited, especially so during the later stages of the Programme. In its first phase (1996-2000), RDs also acted as POs, which led to some uncertainty about managerial relationships within the team (this situation may have existed in other PIs).
- Its work was spread across four (later three) regional centres which were a long distance apart, making communication and contact amongst the programming team problematic; and regular close contact with Ottawa difficult. During the middle period, when middle management was largely absent and a chain of authority through to Ottawa was limited – the PLaW (like other PIs) operated to a ‘flat’ structure. But in the particular case of the PLaW PI, with its concentration of staff in the regional offices, awareness in Ottawa of the content, progress in team building and in the development of a distinctive PLaW ‘profile’ was probably limited. This led to the perception

that the PI lacked clarity and direction; there was a level of uncertainty about what the program was all about.

- Its thematic interests (Desertification, Dryland Water Management and Sustainable Production Systems and Policies) were strongly (though not exclusively) associated with the three centres. Thus Desertification was clearly linked to the WARO, Dryland Water Management to MERO (although there were ‘water’ projects in both West and southern Africa) and Sustainable Production Systems and Policies to EARO (later ESARO). Many of the key staff associated with these sub-program themes and regions came to the new PI in 1996 with a particular and individual experience and a set of projects from the past.
- Desertification, Dryland Water Management and Sustainable Production Systems and Policies constitute very broad factor complexes. Although these are all subsumed under the ‘food security’ epithet, in itself this is perhaps rather too broad to provide the tractable ‘core’ that could form the basis for a well-integrated and coherent PI. In other words there was little inherent synergy or underlying unity amongst these three.

Whilst some of these events and characteristics were not unique to the PLaW PI, when put together they almost certainly acted as breaks to what otherwise could have been the steady evolution of a PI ‘signature’. Such a signature was not clearly articulated to the centre, which seems to have remained unsure of the real progress and consistency in approach which the PLaW PI was slowly developing.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE PLAW PI

The working approach of the PLaW in developing the PI and in relations with its partners is characterised by a number of distinctive features:

- For the most part, IDRC is viewed as a genuine and involved supporter by its partners in their project work (particularly noticeable through interviews with the EWEM team, CDS in Cairo, the crop-livestock interaction project and WARF in West Africa). This mentoring is built on intellectual excellence, hard-won experience and trust, which goes beyond mere financial support.
- In general, IDRC/PLaW’s adopts a long vision, working with partners through several cycles of support. This facilitates the development (within partner organisations) of a real NRM CB approach. Some of present and former PLaW staff interviewed questioned the duration of support, arguing for a maximum of two cycles. From the partners (not surprisingly), sustained financial support over a long period – by implication more than two cycles – was favoured.
- A central feature of the PLaW PI has been its focus on participatory, multi-disciplinary work at the ground level. In supporting these research projects at the community level in the field, for the most part managed by PLaW POs from the Regional Offices, the PLaW PI may have differed from others. The importance of this point lies in the fact that progress on the ground under these circumstances can be slow (more so in West Africa, where capacity can be limited and infrastructures poorly developed). Projects of this type are generally difficult to progress and protracted in their development, but the program team has voiced strong support for this type of activity.
- Throughout these cycles of support, the progressive diffusion of IDRC concepts into partner organisations takes place, with a gradual shift through field-based research to policy and outreach to communications and institutional support. Good examples are the work with NARO, Uganda, with the AHI, the Tissue-Cultured bananas project in Kenya, the crop-livestock projects in West Africa. Both POs and partner researchers have stressed this progression and its seems well-embedded within the working practice of the programming team.
- However, the nature of policy engagement is largely left to partners (albeit with encouragement from POs) and therefore can appear rather uncoordinated. In part this reflects a second stage

emphasis in the PI's objectives. Guidance on policy engagement intersected a trajectory whose initial focus was on technical aspects and on developing capacity in multi-disciplinary NRM research and on embedding gender issues.

- PLaW has operated to a dispersed model (by necessity, given geographical spread and field-based operational model) allowing significant PO autonomy.
- There is a complementary mix of skills and experiences within the core PLaW Program Team, which facilitates a broad-based, multi-factored approach to working with partners. However, despite annual or more frequent team retreats and joint assessment of proposals, the potential for greater synergy in project support is not always realised, although this had been envisaged for the next period of PLaW's work (interview with team leader).

WHAT HAS PLAW ACHIEVED?

As the PLaW PI has evolved and consolidated its approaches and practice, concrete achievements have become evident. Consideration of a limited number of projects leads to the following conclusions:

- A range of projects have been successfully managed which conform to PLaW objectives. Some have placed greater emphasis on one rather than all three objectives (e.g. the Elangata Wuas, Environmental Management project, which focussed first on researching natural resource management technologies, though in its third phase is now paying greater attention to community organisation and policy work), while, others have spread their focus across all three (e.g. the AHI).
- The PI has supported a range of activities which target these objectives in different ways (field-based production system research, mid-level policy-relevant institution building, a mix of RSPs which focus on skills development and methodologies, long-term capacity building in NARs, etc.)
- PLaW has encouraged a range of outputs from these projects and from IDRC itself. 'Stronger' partners, such as AHI, have produced a wide range of material, from policy briefs, research reports, a web site, etc. Other such as the EWEM III are more limited in their outputs, but have nevertheless produced reports, research results and technical materials. A standard dissemination and output format structure does not appear to have been developed. Furthermore, these outputs are, in general, strongly associated with the individual projects. There is less evidence of a generic PLaW house style and output through which the broader lessons of the PLaW as a program are addressed. The lack of research officer support in Ottawa from 1997/98 to 2002 may have been a contributory factor.

A systematic analysis of impacts is not possible within the scope of this review, but some indicators of success are evident within a number of projects:

- New production technologies (examples – Elangata Wuas, Environmental Management III, banana projects with NARO in Uganda, Crop-Livestock interactions in the sahel, Tissue Culture Banana for Smallholders, AHI, etc.)
- Widespread adoption of these new technologies (examples – banana projects with NARO in Uganda, Crop-Livestock interactions in the sahel, Tissue Cultured Bananas for Smallholders in Kenya)
- Scaling up and outreach (examples – banana projects with NARO in Uganda, Crop-Livestock interactions in the sahel, Water Demand Management Middle East and North Africa, AHI)

- Changing the climate of opinion (examples – Water Demand Management Middle East and North Africa, AHI and partners – changes to Makerere University Agricultural Faculty curriculum, ditto Nairobi – in process, Tissue Culture Banana for Smallholders – potentials of and policy towards bio-tech. potentials in ECA)
- Policy impacts (Gestion des usages conflictuels de l'eau dans le bassin du Nakambé – changes in water law, AHI – changes in implementation of NAADS, ECAPAPA on trans-border seed trade)

It can be argued that successes such as these can be attributes to a multitude of factors, but it seems clear that the PLaW PI's mode of operation has directly contributed through the following actions:

- Patient, long-term support for partners appears to be critical. This has been noted through interviews with a range of partners. Production systems research for development, including bio-physical and social sciences, a participatory approach and an engagement with advocacy and policy change is hard for field researchers to internalise and it takes time. In this regard, multi-disciplinary teams that think and work interactively and in an interdisciplinary fashion are very difficult to nurture.
- By working with wider development communities, liaising and cooperating with other donors in support of key projects (Elangata Wuas, Environmental Management III, New approaches to people-centred natural resource management for development in southern Africa (PLAAS and CASS), WaDiMena, Tissue-Cultured Bananas, ASARECA, AHI, etc.).
- Consistent help in developing and progressing proposals with partners (interviews with CDS in Cairo, with ECAPAPA in Entebbe and with the EWEM team in Kenya confirm this), so as to include from the outset key elements such as stakeholder and gender analysis, attention to both bio-physical and social factors in production system research, early engagement of policy community, attention to outreach, dissemination and building a community of interest/practice.
- The central role of the POs in bringing their expertise and experience to bear on project development. In my discussions with partners (and without prompting on my part), I have been consistently made aware of the value that is placed on this intellectual support.

The following table itemises some of the key attributes that characterise a number of these projects in the fields of research activity, policy, dissemination and stakeholders.

Table 3 shows how a range of projects have evolved and incorporated PLaW's key approaches. The + signs in columns 3 and 4 represent greater or lesser emphasis on these two attributes – as noted through documentation, evaluation reports and interviews with POs and partners:

Table 3 Selected projects and their attributes

| Project ID | Partner : Project(s) | Key support elements | | Field research | Policy, outreach, scaling up | Dissemination | Stakeholders |
|-------------------|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| | | Institution building | Capacity building | | | | |
| 100652 | NMK : Elangata Wuas, Environmental Management III | | + | Has progressed beyond technical focus to participatory, social science inputs | Currently making efforts to overcome policy hurdles to implementing technical innovations | Reports, participates in relevant workshops | CBOs, Academic researchers, Local Authority, |
| 55190 | ISAAA : Tissue Culture Banana for Smallholders (Kenya) | | + | Progressed to participatory, extension and marketing emphasis once technical issues resolved | With Rockefeller support is targeting market chains as next key element, farmer training, CBA of system, etc. | PPT presentation, advocacy, community of practice | KARI, private sector, NGOs, farmer groups, extension agencies, universities. |
| 003989, 101807 | PLAAS/ CASS : New approaches to people-centred natural resource management for development in southern Africa | + | | Limited to small grants, works largely from secondary material | Major emphasis has been to shift climate of opinion around community-based NRM | Policy briefs, use of media, workshops and network; web page | network of researchers, practitioners, NGOs, government decision-makers |
| 055359, 101592 | AHI : African Highland Resource Management | ++ | ++ | Initial research through NARO field stations, progressed to community and watershed scale. Shift from technical focus to participatory approaches and major social science input | Has focussed on wider outreach and policy intervention in Phase III | Multiple media: web, policy briefs, training workshops/visits, reports. | NAR and IARC researchers, Farmer Groups, NGOs, NAADS, ASARECA, government decision-makers |
| 001496 ... 102252 | NARO : Series of banana-related projects | ++ | +++ | Long-term support to develop both technical options and to integrate social science and participatory approaches into NARO thinking and methods | Widespread adoption of new technologies, facing marketing issues - same as for 55190 | Highlighted in media (newspapers), ... | links to AHI, ASARECA, Makerere University |

| Project ID | Partner : Project(s) | Key support elements | | Field research | Policy, outreach, scaling up | Dissemination | Stakeholders |
|-------------------------|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| | | Institution building | Capacity building | | | | |
| 101621 | ECAPAPA : Capacity Strengthening in Managing Conflicts in Natural Resource Management and Use in E,C and S. Africa | +++ | + | Interstate policy analysis, tariffs, tax regimes, commodity trading, etc. | Major focus is policy work. Has developed cross-border seed transfer policy. Strengthen NARs policy engagement capacity | Reports, policy papers, | National legislators and technical staff, NARs, COMESA, universities, IARCs |
| 55024 | ASARECA | +++ | + | Competitive Grants System | Coordinates/brokers research strategies through NARs. Key position in directing ECA agricultural research, networks, sponsors research | Hosts 17 key networks for ECA, websites, a range of publications, website, conferences, training workshops, etc. | Member states in ECA, major donors and international agencies, AHI and other programmes |
| 100379 | WARF : West African Rural Foundation | +++ | ++ | Advocates participatory approaches. Interface between technical focus of NARs research and community preferences | Acts as broker and trainer on participatory approaches, outcome mapping | ? | NARs, government staff, runs network check website , NGOs |
| 101631 and RSPs | INERA, INRA, IER : Crop-Livestock integration for sustainable natural resources management in the sub-humid and highland zones of West and Central Africa | + | ++ | Moved progressively from technical to participatory approaches; gender. | Three nation project across different agro-ecological zones - has regional relevance. Specific attention to policy community - workshop and book. Has achieved technical progress - adoption rate not known | Scientific papers, technical notes, policy briefs, training programmes; forums and workshops in three countries | not known beyond involvement of decision-makers in post-research workshops |
| 101196 | ISRA (Senegal) : Améliorer la gestion paysanne des aménagements hydro-agricoles (CORAF) | + | + | At an early stage, needs to move from technical modelling to more participatory approach | Too early in project cycle | Technical report | CBOs |
| 060025, 101806 and RSPs | IDRC : Water Demand Initiative-WaDiMena | +++ | + | Early research focus shifted to policy work through 4 forums | Major policy implications. Regional scope (9 countries), with broad participation. Has 'champions' to spearhead approach within relevant public bodies | New project (WaDiMena) has south-south exchanges. Outputs include case study briefs, policy briefs | Researchers, NGOs, government staff, decision-makers, donors, multi-lateral agencies |

Coherence of the PLaW PI

In order to present itself as a program, rather than a loose assemblage of funded activities, the coherence of the PLaW PI needs to be visible and if possible, self-evident. A first approach might be to examine the range of projects – through the project portfolio – to see if their titles or subject matter indicates some sense of cohesion and deliberate design. However, in examining the PI project portfolio, such an internal consistency is not immediately apparent. It is not possible to see any internal coherence to the program merely from an examination of project titles. Projects are very varied; entitled according to different criteria and showing little obvious connectivity or relationship. It would be hard to see what the PLaW is all about from a quick overview of project titles. It should be noted, however, that in part this reflects the choice of the programming team to respond to initiatives from the ground – which inevitable leads to an eclectic mix.

However, a review of the project portfolio reveals that, in terms of financial allocation and duration, and as an initial working categorisation, projects can usefully be separated into three broad types:

1. Relatively large field research projects (>CD300,000), implemented by multidisciplinary teams – such as EWEM III, the Tissue Culture Banana project, Crop-Livestock interaction in West Africa, Arsaal in the Middle East, etc. These are spread across the four targeted ecosystems in sub-Saharan Africa and constitute the ‘building blocks’ of the PI. They typically last for an initial period of three years. In keeping with IDRC’s practice of long-term support, they frequently undergo several successive phases. In terms of the major elements of PLaW (sustainable development, environment, participation, etc.), these can be considered the core of the programme.
2. Smaller RSP projects of shorter duration (<CD100,000), with a clear focus on support for larger projects, or themes which cross-cut several. Usually involving information/training (workshops on gender analysis, participation, meetings of project staff, etc.), these are of fixed length and mostly specifically targeted– sometimes a one-two day meeting, or a short commissioned paper on a particular aspect of the program (gender analysis, participation), etc.
3. Bigger institutional support funding (ASARECA, ECAPAPA, OSSREA, CDS and WARF) is perhaps less easy to categorise. These projects all deal with communities of practice, closing the loop, etc. and relate directly to capacity building and policy engagement. They are also spread across the four targeted ecosystems (highlands, arid lands, semi-arid lands, sub-humid lands) and the different regions (East and Central Africa, Southern Africa, West Africa and North Africa and the Middle East). Whilst in some respects, the PLAAS/CASS southern Africa CBNRM network fits into this category, it is also linked to group one above, in that its focus is clearly on local communities and resource tenure/environmental management. Some of these receive larger funding from other agencies and thus IDRC may have less direct leverage over project evolution.

PROJECT TYPOGRAPHIES:

Beyond this working typology, a range of specific criteria can be used to differentiate and categorise projects – by amount of financial support, by region, by substantive content or overt subject matter, by general theme, by duration (workshop, short contract, 1, 2 or 3 year project), etc. To a certain extent, this has already been attempted within PLaW for the years 1996/7 to 2002/3 (Navarro, 2004). In this analysis projects were clustered according to site, subject matter (objectives) and approaches; and characterised by activity levels and financial allocation:

Table 4 Analysis of PLaW project support (by theme and objective)

Exclusive clusters

| Cluster | % activities | % allocation | sub-cluster | % activities within cluster | % allocation within cluster | % total allocation |
|--|--------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| CB approach, participation, stress on capacity building, empowerment | 14 | 11 | soil management | 74 | 40 | 4.4 |
| | | | desertification | 13 | 21 | 2.3 |
| | | | water management/conflict | 13 | 39 | 4.3 |
| CB approach, participation, stress on research agenda | 60 | 75 | ENRM concepts and tools | 63 | 65 | 48.8 |
| | | | commodity/production | 33 | 30 | 22.5 |
| | | | commodity/marketing | 3 | 5 | 3.8 |
| Special issues, cross-cutting themes | 12 | 13 | gender issues | 45 | 42 | 5.5 |
| | | | resource tenure | 22 | 23 | 3.0 |
| | | | marketing for smallholders | 33 | 35 | 4.6 |

Overlapping clusters (overlap across clusters above and between clusters below)

| Cluster | % activities | % allocation | sub-cluster | % activities within cluster | % allocation within cluster | % total allocation |
|--|--------------|--------------|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Addressing policy and institutional tools/concepts | 70 | 75 | water general | 28 | 17 | 12.8 |
| | | | water demand management | 10 | 13 | 9.8 |
| | | | land and water, other NRs | 62 | 70 | 52.5 |
| Addressing organization, research management, networking, information, dissemination, etc. | 64 | 47 | organization, planning, evaluation | 64 | 47 | 22.1 |
| | | | networking, information sharing, decision-making | 74 | 74 | 34.8 |

This tabulation shows how the PLaW PI has addressed key subject matter, such as soil fertility, gender, water management, etc. According to the first table, nearly 50 percent of financial allocation has been directed at concepts and tools for ENRM within a CB approach, which emphasises participation and research development (including on-farm research). In general the percentage 'fit' is good, suggesting a well selected portfolio which (given the inheritance of projects from the pre-PLaW period) goes a long way to fulfilling the objectives of the programme. In terms of Objective 1 (*Factors and processes of degradation or improvement of the productive and service capacity of land and water resources, including both bio-physical and socio-economic factors*), the first set of clusters reveals how this has been addressed. Objectives 2 (*Policies and institutional arrangements that equitably increase access, availability and the quality of land and water resources*) and 3

(Communication strategies to foster and facilitate participation in development initiatives at community level) are more evident in the second clustering set.

This categorisation gives a clear indication of the predominant emphasis within the PI, developing concepts and tools for research into natural resource management, with major support for policy work and institution building. However, for the complete project portfolio of PLaW, this form of clustering does not really arrange projects into a coherent whole; a set which seems ordered, with a comprehensive underlying logic. If the latter exists, it is not easily apparent by examining the Program via these, or the other types of criteria listed above.

An alternative perspective would be to reflect on the underlying purposes of the projects and the fundamental approaches to their genesis and execution. In this categorisation, I focus particularly on the big projects as listed above (type 1). Some of these deeper characteristics, which run across many (if not necessarily all) of the projects, are as follows:

1. Environment, society and production

This complex is clearly recognised by the TL of the PLaW (L. Navarro) and is explicitly mentioned in the 2003 analysis of the program (Navarro, 2004). In fact it is a logical approach to project designs which strive to be holistic in approach. Most rural development activities would claim to follow this agenda. Within PLaW, there is a concerted effort to build such a systems outlook, a feature evident from the commissioning of a systems approach review in 2003 (Stroud and Khandelwal, 2003).

The Elangata Wuas, Environmental Management III, MD-Biotechnology to Benefit Small Scale Banana Producers in Kenya, the On-farm banana and natural resources management research with NARO (Uganda) and the Crop-Livestock interactions work in West Africa can be considered here. All four are concerned with environmental/resource management, local community involvement (participation) and address issues of productive efficiency, stakeholder analysis, gender and equity concerns.

2. Many actors/agencies/institutions involved at different levels and intensity.

In the bigger projects of East and Southern Africa, PLaW encourages the building of constituencies of stakeholders:

- For Elangata Wuas, Environmental Management III, there is the core team of three from the National Museums of Kenya (NMK), plus a group of university and NAR researchers, employed outside the project, but who are drafted in as and when necessary and who form part of an inner 'thought' team with continuity in their relationship with the project. There are donors, who engage in intellectual as well as financial support. There are the Maasai CBOs and the constituents and (although not directly involved or employed), traders and transporters of natural resource products (sand, charcoal, etc.) and the contingent local authority and regulatory bodies.
- For the MD-Biotechnology to Benefit Small Scale Banana Producers in Kenya project the scope is even wider: ISAAA, KARI, private companies, partner agencies (both national and international), the farmer constituents and their various groupings (e.g. Banana Growers Association), the Farmer Schools and the contracted researchers; and many more.
- The African Highlands Initiative project has progressively brought a broad range of stakeholders into its work. These have included NARs (particularly NARO, KARI and EARO), ICRAF and other IARCs, NGOs, farmer groups, Uganda's extension agency (NAADS) and international donors.
- The Water demand Management network in the Middle East and North Africa is similar in the way it has build a broad community of interest, with national governments, international research and donor agencies as well as regional and national NGOs.

A key feature of these bigger projects is therefore a recognition that an effective community of interest will incorporate this type of multi-agency or multi-institutional partnership. Discussions with the

Team Leader (Nairobi) indicate that there is an active interest on the part of PLaW to build such stakeholder communities, so as to encourage a broad-based approach to project development.

3. Interdisciplinary thinking within a multi-disciplinary team

The significance of this multi-agency composition lies in the capacity of PLaW projects to tie the different institutions and their research/development staff into a common vision of the project and to realise their respective parts in it. This is generally an evolving vision, whereby the PLaW PO ‘steers’ the progress of the project and encourages cross-disciplinary thinking and understanding. This seems to be the case for the Elangata Wuas and MD-Biotechnology to Benefit Small Scale Banana Producers work. I was less able to discern this progression in discussion with PLAAS regarding the new approaches to people-centred natural resource management for development in southern Africa (PLAAS and CASS) project. Even so, inter-disciplinarity is implicit in the project proposal and has been there from the beginning. The same is true for the Southern African Program for Improved Trans-Boundary Natural Resources Management of the IUCN, although the capacity of the team to develop multidisciplinary research and to think in an inter-disciplinary way has not yet been evaluated. For the PLAAS/CASS project, there is a clear social science emphasis in its core team thinking, although the relative ‘absence’ of the physical sciences was acknowledged. This emphasis stands in contrast to the Elangata Wuas project, which has greater strength in the physical and biological sciences, although within the domain of social science, participation and policy analysis have been strongly emphasised.

4. Technology, policies and building communities of practice as outputs

These are closely related to the three primary objectives of the PLaW PI. Table 4 addresses these elements in terms of financial allocation and activity levels. Though not necessarily at the outset, through their evolution and with active PLaW encouragement and steerage, the bigger projects target these concerns. The prime example is the African Highlands Initiative, which has dealt effectively with NRM and production technologies, has and continues to intervene in the policy arena and has developed a regional community of practice. Table 3 indicates, across a selection of projects, how and to what effect these three components have been addressed.

In reviewing the history of the PLaW PI, I have drawn extensively from discussions with PLaW POs and from a key, retrospective analysis of its performance. People, Land and Water PI: portfolio evolution and analysis 1996-2003 (Navarro, 2004) reviews the 1996/7 - 2002/3 period and looks to the future of PLaW. It includes a request addressed to present and former PLaW staff to respond to a series of questions about the future direction of the PI. Whilst this is an ‘insider’ perspective and would be expected to be positive about achievements, the comments from PLaW staff are revealing for their candour and reflectivity. I have included below a selection of extracts from these statements, in particular, responses to the question: “What would you recommend we insist to carry into the new super PI that is in PLaW now?” (page 10):

“Value of identifying good partners, and ‘stick with them’ as much as you can.” page 11

“... given resource limitations, providing long-term support to a few selected institutions is still the way to go” page 14

“ ... encouraging developing country professionals to identify problems and to come up with creative and ‘out of the box’ solutions” page 18

“ ... two-way interaction between policy and CBNRM” page 19

“... to develop the capacity to do policy-relevant research”, “Teams have to leave space (that means time and money) for odd-balls, e.g., the sorts of projects that, to hark back a few years, Ron Ayling and Danilo Anton and Andrew McNaughton used to come up with from time to time.”, “The broader lesson is that, to some degree, the team should programme around its team members.” page 22

These statements clearly emphasise the value of a flexible approach which responds to initiatives from the ground and which bears the imprint of PI staff expertise and judgement. If these suggestions are

followed, then it will always be difficult for PLaW to present a set of projects which ‘hang’ together in an instantly recognisable way. If PLaW is to retain the ambition to pioneer fresh approaches to research for development and capacity building within Africa, it should be able to respond to innovative proposals from the ground. If an overly structured and formalistic approach is followed in trying to build an overtly coherent PI from the outset, this element of flexibility might well be jeopardised.

OVERVIEW

Within the PI there are key long-term projects dealing with sustainability, resources/environment and livelihoods and adopting a multi-disciplinary, ‘holistic’ approach. These are supported by a series of RSP events for training, network strengthening in subjects such as gender analysis, participation, etc. The third element: the higher level institutional support (ECAPAPA, ASARECA, etc.) enhances regional capacity and champions regional research strategies.

At this meta-level then, it is possible to perceive of a PLaW PI which has an inherent logic and an internal coherence. This is the more significant given the historic trajectory of PLaW and the manner in which it has metamorphosed from a series of different and independent Divisions. PLaW did not start from a blank sheet, onto which a clear structure and internal consistency could have been painted at the beginning. The history of PLaW is clearly significant in shaping the PLaW as it is constructed today and any review of the coherence of the program should take this into account.

When this history is coupled to the fact that of the original PLaW PO team of 12, only 4 were still involved in 2002, and that these 4 were from different backgrounds – not just in disciplinary approach or subject matter, but in the themes they targeted, it is not surprising that there emerges a mix of projects that seem at first glance to lack a coherent focus.

Nevertheless, coherence is evident in the ‘hierarchy’ of projects. Thus there are the field projects such as Elangata Wuas, the Crop-Livestock Integration Project in West Africa, there are the projects such as PLASS/CASS which synthesise field results and other studies in order to scale up research output and stimulate a wider policy debate and there are the higher-level institutional support projects, such as ASARECA (and ECAPAPA), WARF, which are positioned between field-level community-based projects and higher orders of opinion forming and decision-making. Communications work is supported by the PDC projects, which, in one or two instances have dovetailed with the field-based research work. Many of the projects incorporate network development and support, which further enhances their outreach. All of this is supported by RSPs, which provide training, guidance and loci for specialist technical and skills support and dissemination. Put together, these different streams of activities are mutually supportive and collectively add up to more than the sum of their respective parts. Ultimately they amount to a coherent strategy which addresses the objectives of PLaW in a dispersed, but nevertheless collectively effective manner. In a schematic form, Figure 3 portrays this dispersed, but nevertheless connected arrangement of projects.

THE PROGRAM TEAM

In reviewing the internal coherence of the programme, a key question is the extent to which the PLaW PI has developed a consolidated program ‘team’ – in the sense of working together, continuously with partners and thereby influencing their development. At present the team seems stretched across three regions, with only four senior program staff who devote more than 50 percent of their time to the PI. There is no longer a Regional Office for Southern Africa, so that the whole of the East, Central and southern Africa program is effectively managed by the Team Leader in Nairobi, with a great than average number of projects to support; with a senior PO in Dakar, one in Cairo and two more working out of Ottawa. Southern Africa in particular seems somewhat ‘distanced’. Whilst frequent contact with

Kenyan and Ugandan partners (for example, NMK, ISAAA, AHI, ECAPAPA, ASARECA) can be made out of Nairobi, such a close contact is less feasible for those in the southern African region (especially the IUCN Trans-boundary NRM and the PLAAS/CASS projects). Discussions with PLAAS indicated a sense of isolation from PLaW, whereby IDRC is seen more as a donor than a mentor (though given the research experience of the PLAAS/CASS team, such mentoring may be less necessary than in other cases). The notion of PLaW as a partner in developing ideas and actions seems to have less purchase there than I observed in Nairobi. Whilst the major bilateral donors (DFID, SIDA, CIDA, etc.) are not expected to play much more than a funding role for projects, the Foundations, (including here IDRC, which is considered to 'behave' more like a Foundation than a bilateral donor), are viewed differently, particularly with their longer-term commitment to capacity building. In this they can perform a role of constant support, bringing fresh ideas, facilities, etc., rather than merely funds. This element makes IDRC/PLaW distinctive and is one of its most positive attributes; yet in this it is hampered by what may be over-reach, with too few staff and too great a spread (both in its geographical extent and in its broad holistic approach to research for development). The result is that for this partner and perhaps others there is a perception of a lack of close engagement.

PROJECT ARTICULATION

Another way of addressing the PLaW PI's coherence is to examine how its different elements are connected or linked. In East Africa, the sustained support for NARO and the Water Hyacinth, Cassava² and Banana projects is instructive. Early support for NARO – in fact before the beginning of PLaW – has been successively followed by new projects, which in turn has drawn on the expertise of another PO within PLaW to build capacity in Participatory Development Communication. This long sequence of projects has led to the development of capacity within NARO that goes beyond the confines of the team working on bananas and has extended further with links to NARO and the AHI. Thus there is a cluster of projects in Uganda, in which the central objectives and themes of the PLaW PI have been gradually incorporated and developed. A community of interest, including NARO, AHI, ASARECA and ECAPAPA has emerged.

The AHI itself shows a similar evolution, with support straddling a series of phases, within which the key concepts and skills of PLaW have gradually emerged. At the present time, AHI is looking outwards to build broader constituencies, including watershed-level coalitions of NGOs, farmer groups, extension services and other stakeholders. These coalitions are currently negotiating with Uganda's extension agricultural service (NAADS) to ensure demand driven provision of support services. Another IDRC PI, ACACIA, is also linked through a specific project with AHI which will add to the empowerment of communities in dealing with the outside world. AHI itself is a program of ASARECA, with management input from an IARC: ICRAF. So here too, there are a series of connections, from village-level associations, to NARs, to NGOs, to AHI and outwards to ASARECA and international institutions. The connections across these different scales and stakeholders are shown in Figure 2.

Through all this the aims of PLaW (technological improvements, institutional development and participation, policy engagement, scaling up and closing the loop) are actively being addressed. Some of these themes and their particular expression across the projects in Uganda are listed below:

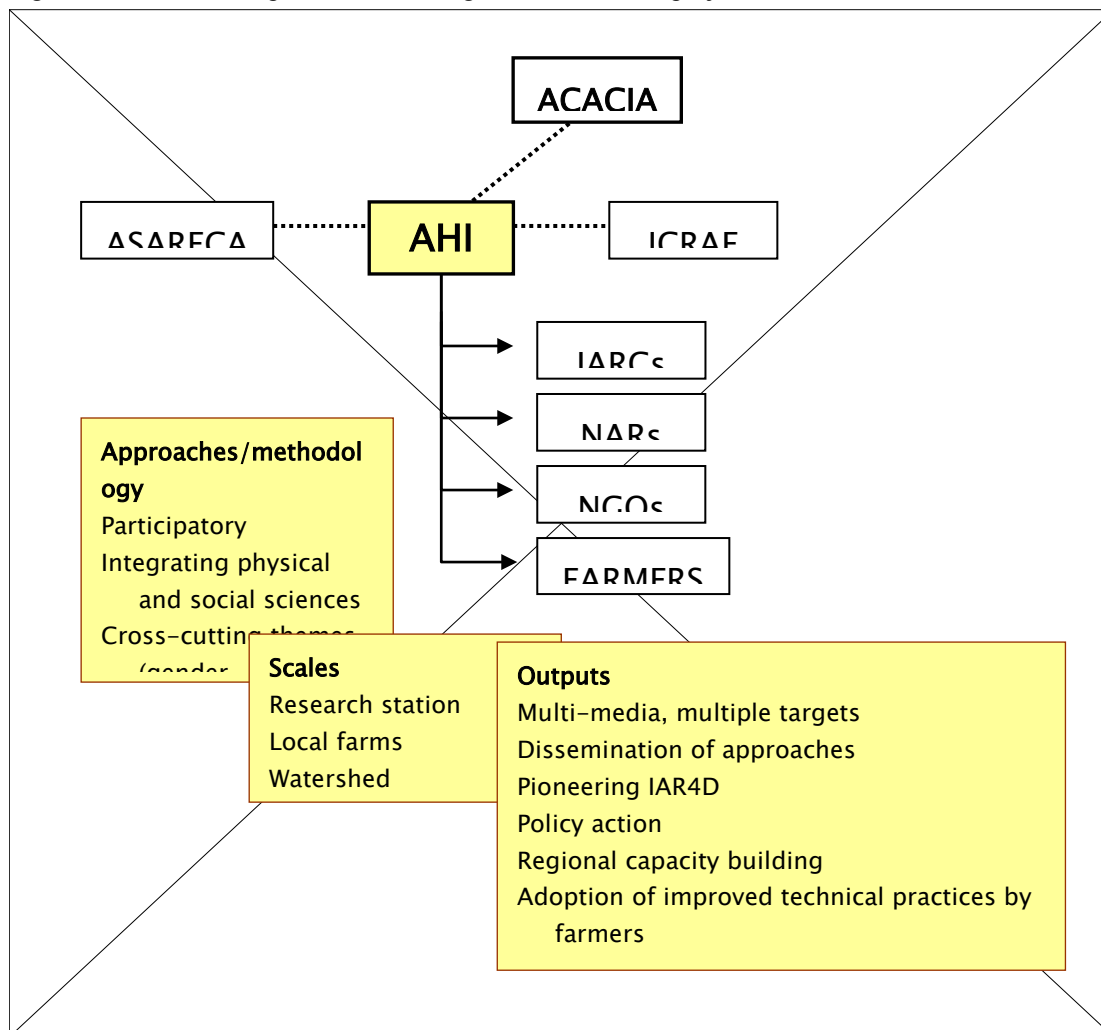
- Combining social and physical sciences to address environmental and sustainable development issues (NARO in particular, AHI, to a lesser extent ASARECA, ECAPAPA)
- Championing and developing capacity in participatory approaches and development communication (NARO and AHI in particular)

² The water hyacinth and cassava projects predate PLaW, but in this context form part of a long trajectory of support.

- Scaling up (AHI, NARO, ASARECA, ECAPAPA)
- Building communities of interest and practice, closing the loop (ASARECA and ECAPAPA in particular, also AHI and to a lesser extent NARO)
- Cross-cutting themes: equity, gender and stakeholder analysis (especially AHI, but to a lesser extent also NARO, ASARECA and ECAPAPA).

IDRC has undoubtedly been the driving force behind this evolution, with sustained support from Rockefeller and to a lesser extent other donors (e.g. DFID).

Figure 2 Scales of operation and linkages within the AHI project.



The mix of projects elsewhere in East Africa is less easy to connect in this way. Whilst individual projects show elements of incorporating and developing PLaW's key objectives and themes, there is less evidence of the inter-project connectedness that characterises the cluster in Uganda. Projects such as the Elangata Wuas, Environmental Management III have begun to incorporate social science approaches and skills development and are actively promoting a participatory agenda alongside its undoubted early focus on technical issues (e.g. charcoal and ostrich production, renovation of rangelands, sustainable sand and gravel extraction). There is also clear evidence of attempts to close the loop through an effort to grapple with policy and statutory legislation that impinges on the project (see Policy discussion below). A community of interest, involving a range of private and public stakeholders is emerging.

In a similar fashion, the Tissue-Cultured Bananas project (055190) also combines private and public stakeholders, ranges in scale from local communities and farmer groups to international biotech advocacy, with a NARI (KARI) and several international and national private companies in between. Participatory as well as technical-focussed methods are deployed. Current attention is focussed on the inevitable marketing issues that appear as production (of bananas) increases. Here the project is facing the same issues as the Uganda banana projects. Rockefeller support is also evident in addressing the market chain agenda.

The OSSREA project is less easy to categorise. Essentially it represents an effort to build a new institution in Africa, where social scientists further their skills and provide a general service to the whole of East and Southern Africa. Like ASARECA, ECAPAPA and to a lesser extent WARF, it is a higher-level (upstream of field research) institution-building project and was intended to provide specific social science skills to assist field-level teams in their work (gender and stakeholder analysis, anthropological and social concepts). So far it seems to have had limited success in this arena, although it has brought together a range of African social scientists under one umbrella. Current PLaW support is to build and develop further a range of gender awareness and analysis toolkits with specialist support.

My observations for **West Africa** are less complete. At the level of field-based projects, the Crop-Livestock project in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger has cycled through two phases (100233, 101631) and has gradually shifted from a focus on technical themes to one which involves social science and participatory approaches. It has culminated in a number of output workshops and publications (102234, 102249, 102448) designed to bring together the lessons learnt from the work on the ground and to address policy and scaling up issues. It has also been paralleled by a book addressed to decision makers and authored by the principal PO and the team leader of the project.

| | | |
|-----------|--------|---|
| 1999/2000 | 100233 | Intégration Agriculture-Elevage et Gestion des Ressources Naturelles (Afrique de l'Ouest) |
| 2002/2003 | 101631 | Crop-Livestock integration for sustainable natural resources management in the sub-humid and highland zones of West and Central Africa |
| 2003/2004 | 102234 | Intégrer les résultats de la recherche agricole et environnementale dans la prise de décision politique en Afrique subsaharienne |
| 2003/2004 | 102249 | Leçons tirées des actions de soutien aux programmes d'Action Nationale de Lutte contre la Désertification et mise en exécution de la Convention |
| 2003/2004 | 102448 | Synthèse des recherches sur l'intégration agriculture-élevage en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre |

The first phase 2 evaluation report (Garoute and Sow, 2003) commented favourably on how the thinking within the partner team had successfully evolved towards true interdisciplinarity and how this had been integrated into the researchers host institutions.

As in East Africa, the POs 'nurse' projects and project staff in order to build capacity and encourage inter-disciplinary thinking. Thus for the relatively new project: Améliorer la gestion paysanne des aménagements hydro-agricoles (CORAF) (101196), two field visits per year by the responsible PO, with frequent contact in between parallels the approach adopted in East Africa. There is a similarity here between this project and the Elangata Wuas, Environmental Management III project in Kenya (1006520), with an early focus on technical resource management issues, gradually shifting towards a more participatory, social-science based methodology. Both these projects demonstrate the careful, progressive approach of the PLaW POs in building capacity and gently nursing field teams towards the broader and more demanding agenda and objectives of the PI. For West Africa (as for the most part in East Africa), capacity building is concentrated on the NARs of the region (ISRA, INERA, INRA, IRE) through these projects.

The PDC work (e.g. 00256:Développement d'un Modèle de Communication en Fertilité des Sols chez les Femmes Paysannes au Burkina Faso, 100844:Résolution des conflits d'usage des ressources en eau et communication participative pour le développement dans le bassin du fleuve Nakambé, 101338: Intégration de la communication participative dans les actions de lutte contre la désertification au Sahel (Phase II), which has its longest history in West Africa, also

impressed the first phase 2 evaluation team. CILSS has subsequently adopted PDC for all its programs across the 9 member states of West Africa.

There are synergies across the work of the POs primarily involved in West Africa. The evolution of the crop-livestock interaction projects towards a more people-centred participatory approach connects well with the overt participatory focus of the PDC work. There is also a regional synchrony, with parallel activities in Senegal, Burkina Faso and Mali. According to the POs concerned there is to some extent a shared responsibility for these projects, with frequent interaction and discussion of progress.

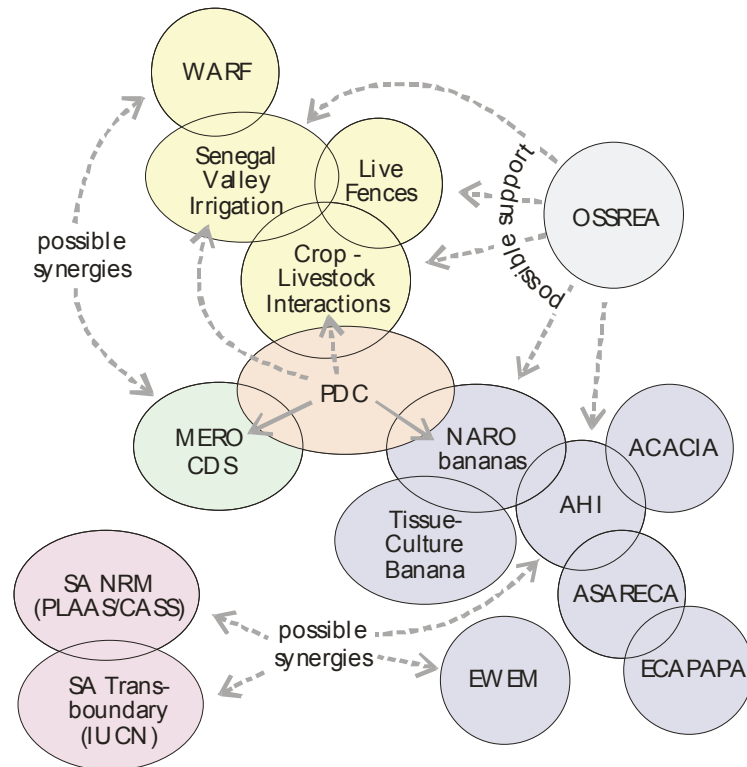
Building capacity progressively through several project cycles, forging links with associated stakeholders and bringing other donors and international institutions into the equation is evident here just as in East Africa. For example, beyond the Crop-Livestock Interactions Project, within the Live Fences project (100832) ICRAF is building a consortium of stakeholders, whilst financial support from CIDA and the Netherlands has been secured.

For **Southern Africa** evidence of articulation within and between projects is scanty. I have already noted that for a number of reasons, projects in southern Africa are 'disconnected' from the mainstream of PLaW's work in East Africa. Physical distance and the current difficulties in Zimbabwe make for a lower level of contact and mentoring. The direct influence of PLaW in shaping and nurturing projects is therefore less evident. My discussions with the PLAAS team in the University of Western Cape revealed that there seems to be no linkage (institutional or formal – beyond personal communications through the network) between the Southern African PLAAS/CASS CBNRM work (projects 100550, 101802, 101007 and 101807) and the southern Africa IUCN Trans-boundary NRM project (101064) despite an obvious conceptual and substantive comparability between the two. A PLaW PI team meeting was held in Cape Town (May 2001), visiting one field element of the PLAAS/CASS project (Leleifontein in Namaqualand) and hosted by PLAAS, but the level of active engagement with the research team and its work seems less evident when compared to the Uganda and Kenya project inputs.

WIDER CONNECTIONS

Whilst each individual project has its own characteristics and history, there are clearly similarities among them at the level of regional location, typology and substance (in the sense of key elements, approaches and general context). Given that IDRC and PLaW champions innovation and community driven research for development, it would seem logical for the partners developing parallel projects to share experiences amongst themselves. This can be fruitful in refreshing thinking within a given team, learning from new ideas that have been developed in isolation within any one project and creating broader communities of interest. Whilst networks go some way to achieving this, there is no substitute for face-to-face discussions, preferably in a field context. The annual PLaW team retreats are a recognition of the benefits that can accrue. The south-south exchanges that have characterised the PDC work and in the new Regional Exchange Facility of the MERO WDM project also demonstrate how this can work.

Figure 3 Potential linkages and synergies amongst selected projects (indicative – not exhaustive)



Of the projects considered in this review, there could be synergies between the southern African partners (IUCN – Southern African Program for Improved Trans-Boundary Natural Resources Management and PLAAS/CASS – New approaches to people-centred natural resource management for development in southern Africa), perhaps also with NMK – Elangata Wuas, Environmental Management III and the AHI. There are similarities in skills, training and outreach between WARF and CDS. Both might benefit through sharing experiences, though here, there might be some language difficulties. The Ugandan-based projects (particularly the AHI and the NARO banana-related support) are already connected through the AHI’s work with NARO and other regional NARS and have been considered above. Such linkages have been considered for what might have been the next phase of the PLaW PI. They may well be possible under the new PI. Figure 3 shows how such connections may be constructed.

Policy, Outreach

Where projects develop innovative technical production strategies and gain community acceptance and involvement, further progress may be constrained by factors external to the community and its resource base. Outreach strategies, information dissemination and the external policy environment are crucial to effective scaling up. Even within the community and its natural resource assets, unfavourable legislation may prevent initiatives from being implemented. Policy engagement is therefore a corollary of work within the ‘boundaries’ of any given project. Since PLaW started, policy emphasis has been recognised, particularly in Phase 2. Project proposals are now expected to build in tools and objectives to deal with outreach and policy.

IDRC itself has recently commissioned a series of reviews, discussions and case studies on the policy outcomes of its work (http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-64999-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html) and this work is familiar to the PLaW team. The review contains two papers of clear relevance to the PLaW PI, Lindquist (2001) and Ackello-Ogutu (2003). Thus Lindquist (2001) recognises the importance of mapping the policy community (including both government and non-government ‘actors’) and identifying the discourses and the power relationships that characterise them. He then goes on to discuss advocacy coalitions, fragmented jurisdictions and alliances. This is a highly informative paper, which can enrich the policy deliberations of partners (the NMK for example in its Elangata Wuas work – see below for further comment). Ackello-Ogutu’s work is essentially an evaluation of ECAPAPA. In this, it highlights the regional mandate of ECAPAPA and its concern with tracking policy and legislative inconsistencies between states. It is not immediately relevant to specific policy issues that affect such projects as the Elangata Wuas Environmental Management work, essentially national, even sub-national in its outlook. At a more practical level, Tyler and Mallee (2004 draft, as yet unpublished) draw from Asian case studies in their analysis of the policy reform. They note that policy is ‘sticky’ and slow to change, but that windows of opportunity arise from time to time. For example, the current drive for decentralisation (see Externalities) opens up possibilities for community-based resource control which, in an era of centralised government control, would be much less possible.

In these documents, a range of positions on policy engagement (within IDRC) are noted. Policy can be approached in several ways:

- Building a policy constituency around a project or a number of similar projects – with the aim of swaying the climate of opinion, usually over the mid- to long-term. The CBNRM and WDM and the Crop-Livestock projects fit this category
- Interacting with policy development by attempting to influence specific legal instruments (for example a change in the law). The EWEM is a good example of this.
- Making a decision maker/policy person part of the research team from the outset. WDM is the closest to this category, whereby government staff have been closely involved throughout the 4 forums, some of whom are now designated as ‘WDM champions’.
- Developing capacity to map policy constituencies and their power relations and to find points of entry.

A greater focus on policy has characterised the second phase of the PLaW PI. In working with partners, PLaW locates policy engagement within the progression of enhanced capacity building that has already been noted. For the most part partners are encouraged to deal with policy issues as they relate to their own project development. Some examples below indicate the ways in which this has developed. Apart from ECAPAPA itself, there appears to be no formal and specifically directed -- or concerted -- program action on policy advocacy. In the context of what PLaW can synthesise from its range of projects, and what it can do in formulating policy interactions, the scope for policy development seems limited at present. Individual projects are encouraged to participate in policy development, as an outcome of their work, but there appears to be no concerted action on this front from PLaW itself -- as a specific and targeted program activity. This may be desirable in future, for it

is clear from the projects so far examined that potentials for scaling up and for greater outreach can be inhibited by existing policy arrangements.

At a wider, international level, IDRC itself – through its POs – has acted at an international level: in Rome at the UN Roundtable on Communication for Development in September 2004, which referred to Isang Bagsak in its final declaration. PDC has been adopted at CILSS and has spread from the banana group to the whole of NARO, a multi-disciplinary approach, including physical and social science and participation has been inculcated within the ECAPAPA's work and thinking.

The importance of policy considerations can be realised through a brief review of the following projects. For these, policy issues have been approached in different ways that broadly conform to the different approaches noted above:

THE ELANGATA WUAS POLICY DILEMMA

A review of PLaW's working file on this project, of associated documents from the NMK, of the evaluation report and of the relevant supplements of Kenya Gazette indicates that although both technical and social questions have been addressed well, the current prospectus of viable options is severely constrained by a set of very difficult policy issues:

Charcoal. It is technically illegal to make or transport charcoal within Kenya, but not to sell it. In practice, this policy and its legal statutes have no real purchase, as charcoal is freely sold in Nairobi and other urban markets and is clearly produced and transported within Kenya. Whilst legal and illegal harassment on the roads raises the costs of transport, nevertheless there is a very vibrant if 'underground' market dynamic. The question for EWEM is to legalise production and transport; to bring the 'black market' of charcoal into the open and regulate it. Only then will the charcoal production scheme be able to proceed to its planned potential. The EWEM team have engaged in policy discussions with the local authority, line ministry representatives and participated in a RELMA-sponsored policy workshop. These are part of a direction to loosen the policy constraints which operate at the local level, inhibiting the progress of the development initiatives that have been put together with the Maasai community-based organisation.

Sand. Sand is a valuable resource and is in high demand for the booming construction market in Nairobi. Whilst the main drainage channel of Elangata Wuas (which is the principal water source for the community) is protected by the community from exploitation, other parts of the network are not. Studies have suggested a sustainable yield, but the problem remains control over exploitation and raising revenue. Outside sand contractors can come into the area and legally extract sand - it is a public utility (like roads, etc.) and not a private good within the community. The local authority will exact a 'tax' on exit, but this is not returned to the community. Access to the channel is across private land. The question is: Can the community levy a charge for extraction, negotiate access and compensate the landowner and thereby set quotas? Legally they cannot without some sort of devolved authority. Whilst something like CAMPFIRE might be envisioned, in Kenya it seems, local authorities cannot devolve control of only one part of one sector. It appears that it is all or nothing. If sand extraction powers are devolved then everything else must also be devolved. This needs checking, but there is undoubtedly a policy blockage here.

Ostrich production. As a wild bird, the ostrich is a protected species. It is only considered domesticated livestock (and therefore unprotected) when the eggs are raised in incubators, within a fenced or contained rearing environment. The EWEM approach of taking chicks from the wild and rearing them in makeshift pens is not sufficient to change the ostrich's protected wildlife status. Additionally, the markets seem to be either export to the EU under the unfilled quota allocation, or to local hotels. In the former case, strict hygiene standards are needed in the raising, slaughtering/butchering and transport of meat. This falls under the remit of the Ministry of Livestock, not Wildlife, so even if the wildlife prohibition can be negotiated, there rests the hygiene standards and their monitoring. This will undoubtedly raise costs, so much so as to make the Maasai system (capturing wild chicks) almost as expensive as the commercial, incubator/fenced system. For the local

hotel market, abattoirs are a problem, as is transportation. There seems to be potential here if the policy and market problems can be resolved. The technical aspects are well sorted.

SOUTHERN AFRICA: New approaches to people-centred natural resource management for development in southern Africa

For this project the policy setting is different. Rather than there being a specific policy ‘block’, linked to a specific production initiative, here there is a general policy issue related to land and land/resource tenure. Despite some years of scientific study (in which both PLAAS and CASS, as well as other institutions, universities and academics have played key roles), which demonstrates the possibilities for community control of land and natural resources -- through some sort of common property regime -- governments in Southern Africa remain largely antipathetic and still aspire to land privatisation. The debate is therefore more general than the EWEM case and both public and government opinion needs to be targeted. Accordingly, the PLAAS/CASS have engaged in a series of policy briefings, press releases and other media outlets to spread the message and to try and change the tenor of the debate. For example, a series of policy briefings have been released since the project was first established, dealing with land and resource tenure issues:

Co-governing Natural Resources in Southern Africa with Emphasis on Schemes in Malawi and South Africa. CASS/PLAAS CBNRM Policy Briefs Series - 2001 (No. 1)

Traditional and Modern Institutions of Governance in Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa. CASS/PLAAS CBNRM Policy Briefs Series - 2001 (No. 2)

Radical land reform is key to sustainable rural development in South Africa. Policy Brief - Debating land reform and rural development August 2002 (No. 3).

⋮

Budgeting for Land Reform. Policy Brief - Debating land reform and rural development August 2004 (No. 13).

These briefings are distributed widely to government agencies, the press, NGOs, CBNRM network members, etc., with the intention of creating a broad shift in attitude towards community-based land and resource tenure regimes. In this context, there is a difference between this broad ‘shift of opinion’ approach and that of the EWEM programme, which is focussed on specific policies and laws governing individual resource exploitation. In other words, the policy arena for PLaW is multi-dimensional. In the CASS/PLAAS case, what is required is an opening up of a debate about the broad issue of land/resource restitution and the tenorial forms which might underpin it. In the EWEM case, the policy constraints are quite specific and may be open to alleviation by careful and targeted efforts at specific and identified ‘blockages’.

The Transboundary NRM project of IUCN, supported by PLaW, is more engaged with field-level work than the CBNRM network of PLAAS/CASS, yet there is much in common between the two with regard to policy issues. According to PLAAS (interviews with B.Cousins, F. Matose and W. Whende), there has been no formal meeting of these two teams, though there is contact at an individual level. PLaW does not seem to have played a role in bringing these two projects together. PLAAS expressed a wish to see PLaW more actively engaged in this respect.

TISSUE–CULTURE BANANA: MD-Biotechnology to Benefit Small Scale Banana Producers in Kenya

This program is centred around ISAAA, and has a very large range of institutional links to public and private sector agencies as well as to farmer groups and individual farmers. ISAAA encourages and develops these links, which include policy dimensions. In particular, ISAAA is seeking a policy change in which the government will recognise tissue culture as a viable approach to agricultural development and provide fiscal and technical incentives for its further development and expansion. In

this light ISAA plays an advocacy role and has engaged with MPs, the Africa Biotech Stakeholders forum, ECAPAPA and some of the major bilateral donors. This is an ongoing process.

RELMA

RELMA is not funded by IDRC and is not therefore part of the project portfolio. Nevertheless, it is part of the 'community of interest'. Discussions with Dr. Chin Ong (director) revealed the following:

Charcoal policy developments and participation of IDRC/PLaW. Much appears to be happening on the policy front, with the push for a new environment/forest policy (including charcoal) from a combination of donors (DFID, DANIDA, SIDA, EU), initially to support the currently weak NEMA (National Environment Monitoring Authority). The targets of this policy debate are generally MPs rather than Ministers - reflecting the new politics in Kenya - and the creation of a broad spectrum policy forum. As far as charcoal is concerned, the policy block (as also noted before by the EWEM team) seems to be road charges for transportation - pushing up production costs but not sale price. This occurs even with official permits and discourages investment in sustainable charcoal production. Sustainable charcoal production now seems possible (e.g. Sudan experience, tissue-culture of bamboo and other good planting materials). RELMA have engaged with the Forestry Department and with the Ministry of Energy, as well as the Department of Environment. Donors have also been targeted along with private companies in order to 'push the envelope'. PLaW's role seems to be minimal (as is that of equivalent foundations such as Ford, Rockefeller, etc.). The view from RELMA is that these foundations could usefully participate more.

Project proposers are strongly encouraged, if not obliged, to develop policy goals in their proposals. The active engagement of PLaW staff in building and reconstructing initial proposals and ideas -- to the point of acceptance and commitment to finance -- helps this process of policy outlook and engagement. Virtually all projects should in theory therefore contain significant policy and outreach components. According to the team leader, the role of PLaW in furthering policy and other elements of projects continues after acceptance and initiation. Through discussions at early stages in project lives and through reporting, these elements are continuously monitored and developed.

The policy implications of projects, through outputs and outcomes, are therefore acknowledged as important and significant. As reported in Navarro, 2004, however, these are not always easy to measure and verify. The same report recognises that results may not have been adequately visualized, valued and documented, at least in the early phases of the PI.

ECAPAPA

ECAPAPA is a policy unit within the broader ASARECA secretariat and consists of a small coordinating unit based in Entebbe, Uganda. Along with a range of other donors IDRC supports ECAPAPA through PLaW. According to its mid-term review, one of ECAPAPA's foci is on policies dealing with international seed trade/exchange within the East and Central African region. In this it has achieved some success in the harmonisation and rationalisation of seed policies. This obviously has implications for the Tissue Culture Banana project which is engaged in transferring tissues across the region and even beyond. In these situations, ECAPAPA can play a role in policy dialogue, analysis and action. Although it has a number of other activities (capacity building, small grants allocation, workshops, policy forums and electronic newsletters), discussions with ECAPAPA staff indicated that it is more concerned with policy issues across countries than in those within an individual one (for example charcoal legislation in Kenya).

THE WEST AFRICAN RURAL FOUNDATION (WARF)

WARF is an institution (in fact a foundation) which positions itself between field projects, and their activities on the ground and higher level decision-making fora and agencies. Through its own work

with communities on the ground, it has developed participatory approaches and skills such as outcome mapping, with crucial support from IDRC. It set itself up to act as a ‘broker’ and has gained a reputation across West Africa and beyond. It advises and trains field project teams and researchers in participatory methods, assists in a range of fields – including within IDRC – in outcome mapping and is currently expanding its intellectual horizons to become engaged in policy. It has received sustained and intensive support from IDRC since 1993 and much of its current status and apparent success can be traced to this support. In this way it sits above the level of field projects, yet nevertheless engages with them in their concrete activities with communities and resource management issues, whilst at the same time work effectively as an advocate in the policy arena. It, or an equivalent type of agency (perhaps CDS in Cairo), has the capacity to develop specialist skills in policy analysis. Here I not thinking of policy analysis in which proposed legislative changes are examined for their future impact, but of a more pre-emptive approach, where policy conditions such as: where the channels of policy are formulated, who the key gatekeepers are and what might be the most effective approach towards them are examined.

By working with field teams and understanding policy impacts at that level; and by knowing what might be the most effective ways to promote policy shift, such a facility might constitute an effective route to closing the loop.

AFRICAN HIGHLANDS INITIATIVE (AHI)

Over its three phases of operation, the AHI has scaled up its activities, progressing from station research, to neighbouring farmers and now up to the watershed level. In the last it has forged a coalition of interested parties, including farmer associations and NGOs and has involved government. In so doing it has pioneered a new approach to policy engagement at this level, particularly with regards to agricultural extension services. In Uganda at the present time the National Agricultural Advisory Service (NAADS) is being privatised. On two fronts, IDRC is engaging with this process. Firstly, through its ACACIA PI – which has a project link with PLaW through the AHI, it is deploying the telecentres and associated activities to work with the changing NAADS to ensure backup support and inputs alongside the information derived through the telecentres. Secondly, the watershed level coalition (CEED – Coalition for Effective Extension Delivery) has successfully negotiated with government to ensure that the new NAADS delivery will be targeted at the parish level rather than at the higher sub-county level (as per its original intentions). This development, which will bring service delivery closer to the farmers and make it more effective, is a response to farmer concerns that access to extension services would be difficult at the higher spatial scale. Through CEED, which was brought together through the AHI, farmers have been put in closer touch with extension services and with sufficient authority for their voice to count.

Through its effective engagement with the NARIs, AHI has been asked to assist in embedding its participatory approach to NRM research into the Ethiopian National Agricultural Research Institute (EARO). This will provide a new toolkit and a new orientation to EARO. In a similar vein, NARO has seen a sea-change in its attitude to agricultural research. Rather than remaining as a collection of narrow discipline-based approaches it has gone through a complete re-orientation during the early 2000s, such that, with the support of PLaW through a PDC training program (Improvement of Banana and Natural Resources Management Through Participatory Development Communication – 102252), it now works to a multi-disciplinary approach with a social science component embedded within its traditional bio-physical technical-based work. At the same time it is providing teaching assistance to Makerere University, whereby 20% of NARO senior staff time is spent in supporting the teaching program for agriculture at the university. In this process it is integrating its new multi-disciplinary approach to agricultural research into the fabric of the curriculum. This input is paralleled by a complete change to the curriculum, at the behest of the dean of the Faculty of Agriculture – a former IDRC alumnus.

In these examples, it is evident that in a variety of ways, the impact of PLaW has been to profoundly reshape the direction of capacity building in both the NARs and the University of Uganda and to find

entry points for policy action within the government. PLaW's long-term support for these projects has enabled these changes to take place at a pace and in a form of Uganda's own choosing.

Curriculum change to ensure a supply of appropriately qualified undergraduate and graduate students for the future is also occurring in Kenya, where with 'informal' help from IDRC, the agricultural curriculum of the University of Kenya is being changed to incorporate participatory research skills, a strong social science component and a multi-/inter-disciplinary approach.

POLICY INPUTS FROM THE START

The point has been raised (Lindquist, 2001; Ackello-Ogutu, 2003; Tyler and Mallee, 2004) that to gain effective access to policy formulation and change, it can sometimes be advantageous to place a decision-maker within a multi-disciplinary team from the outset, when a project starts. By working alongside a project team in the field, a decision-maker would be better informed, would internalise the problem in a more durable way and, as a result, would act in a more concerted fashion to shape policy as the project evolves. As Freudenberg (1998) has noted however, decision-makers in government offices rarely have the time to become embedded within a team and to be present in the working environment on a sufficiently continuous manner to be captured. Moreover, policy-makers feed on results, not on early thoughts and aspirations. There is a risk that such an early emplacement might disillusion such a decision-maker if concrete results are slow to emerge. The re-assignment of ministry staff is also commonplace, so that the process of engagement may have to be repeated several times throughout the lifecycle of a project.

Externalities

Systems approaches to rural development, as pinpointed in the Stroud and Khandelwal study (2003), are intended to incorporate all essential factors in working with rural communities who are dependent on natural resources. However, in constructing analytical frameworks – which are built around the ‘community’, its natural resource base and the domains of material production and social reproduction – what is often missing in looking inward at these components of the system is the outer world which intrudes in a variety of ways. Thus social reproduction is severely impacted by the fact of formal education, in which the position of children in the household undergoes a fundamental change (e.g. the changing status of Maasai youth), support networks – classically based on (for the most part) localised extended families – switch their structure to accommodate external political allegiances, with effects on community cohesion. Many other instances could be listed, but the point here is that many models of rural production systems fail to recognise and build in these externalities. In a similar vein, modern trends in material culture have wide-reaching impacts on production systems. Although of relatively long standing, the fact of male (and increasingly female) migration to cities for employment and opportunity, in particular its recent surge, has deep implications for community-based resource management work.

Whilst individual projects and even the program as a whole can have at best only limited impact on these broader external trajectories, they are nevertheless affected by them. One example of the ‘cost’ of external events is in the extent to which the Elangata Wuas project is flowing against the tide of Kenyan land privatisation.

Maasai land in general and Elangata Wuas in particular has undergone a long series of land reform and land tenure changes. A historical common property regime has been progressively privatised in Kenya and has now reached the stage where group ranches are being divided into individualised private plots. Livestock management, overwhelming centred on cattle, gives the Maasai their identity and defines their culture. Without the central role of cattle rearing, it is hard to imagine the Maasai continuing to exist as a distinctive people in East Africa. Yet the classic pattern of Maasai livestock management has been based on mobility and opportunistic grazing within a loosely-defined transhumance system. Different ecological niches across an extended territorial range enable the Maasai to move their cattle to wherever the rains have yielded good pasture. Both long and short distance movements are typical. The group ranch scheme, which was implemented in the 1960s and 1970s severely constrained this movement, although as a people, the Maasai managed to sustain their basic system – albeit under severe pressure. But the break up of group ranches into individualised holdings will prevent the type of seasonal movement that is essential to successful cattle rearing in such harsh and arid environments. In the Elangata Wuas situation, even movement to watering points is being severely restricted. Ultimately it is hard to see how cattle rearing can be maintained. All else in the EW society is subordinate to this crisis. Whilst the efforts of the EWEM team to encourage alternative and sustainable forms of resource exploitation constitutes a very interesting and progressive project, it is hard to see how this can replace a centuries-old production system that lies at the heart of Maasai identity.

Clearly it is beyond the remit of the project and indeed of PLaW to confront this externally driven crisis head on. It is the product of a sustained policy on land that has characterised Kenya since the last years of the colonial era. However, a central feature of the EWEM project – through its focus on a series of resource exploitation elements (charcoal production, grassland regeneration, woodland management, sand extraction, bee-keeping, ostrich and guinea fowl production, etc.) – is an effort to re-energise community-based (not individualised) production strategies. The essential dilemma here is that as land-based resources are steadily privatised, communal control and management becomes ever-more difficult, even beyond the broader policy constraints described below. Whilst the technical merits of these production elements seem well developed and appropriate, the social, institutional and policy constraints – both internal and external, seem well-nigh insurmountable.

The Arid Lands and Resource Management (ALARM) Network for Research in East Africa has received financial support from IDRC and has published a series of working papers on pastoralist

issues in East Africa. Galaty (1999) considers notions of property, specifically describing recent dynamics in the Ewuaso Kedong group ranch in the Rift valley close to Elangata Wuas. Privatisation has led to the widespread sale of land and economic and social differentiation. Many Maasai have become virtually landless. The split-up of the group ranch into individual holdings led to tensions within the community and recourse to the law to adjudicate disputed rights. This process is ongoing. Ole Karbolo (1999) describes how the Loita Maasai may have succeeded in establishing themselves as a Trust and thereby retaining proprietorial control of the Loita Forests, which the local authority had sought to turn into a tourist reserve. Again, this situation is not yet resolved. Both these cases illustrate the dynamics of contested resources and the role that the law and land policy play. In addition to these, there is a considerable literature on the Maasai group ranches and on land privatisation. A number of successful experiments in eco-tourism have also been documented. Whilst the Maasai of Elangata Wuas and the EWEM team have developed an initiative on eco-tourism, there is much in this broader literature that can inform the prospectus for the project.

Despite these wider difficulties, within the EWEM project, attention has been paid to key PLaW objectives and guidance: equity, sustainable resource management, gender, technical developments, participation, etc. These are all well integrated and constantly being progressed through a multi-disciplinary team which has clearly received active support from the PLaW in capacity development and inter-disciplinary thinking. Furthermore, there is a concerted effort to deal with the policy constraints which have emerged as the project has unfolded.

Another example – again dealing with resource tenure – is the southern African People-centred Natural Resource Management project managed by PLAAS/CASS. The external policy environment is recognised here, in which prevailing political/ government attitudes favour land and resource privatisation, supported by multi-lateral institutions such as the World Bank. Through comparative analysis of a range of common property systems and community-based resource management regimes, the project seeks to identify successful non-privatised, non-individualised systems and to promote them – and the broader community based resource management agenda – through a broad-based policy forum in which prevailing attitudes are confronted. In this case the central external force affecting the project is clearly identified. Indeed it is the central focus of the project. The intra-regional basis of the work ensures that the differing tenure environments across the southern African states (South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Mozambique, etc.) are examined and considered.

However, despite the prominence of the CAMPFIRE program and its CBNRM approach – which should favour the effectiveness of the PLAAS/CASS project for policy advocacy, the current political difficulties in Zimbabwe and their central relationship to the land question, severely constrained the project's prospects. IDRC's attention to 'transitions', with its history of work in South Africa and Kenya, should enable it to be well placed as and when the situation in Zimbabwe is resolved.

In the case of the Tissue Culture Banana project, discussions with the ISAAA leader, with Rockefeller and with the PLaW team leader highlighted the key issue of marketing – seen as the vital component for the project to succeed. A marketing study is being developed and will hopefully consider the wider free market environment of modern Kenya, following the adoption of structural adjustment policies in the 1990s. A similar constraint affects the NARO banana work in Uganda, where technical breakthroughs have led to substantially increased banana production – with attendant marketing problems.

These three examples demonstrate that wider external trends and factors can have significant impacts on the progress of projects. There are a number of other broad scale external trends evident in Africa.

Decentralisation and the removal of state monopoly on services and trade have followed in the wake of structural adjustment. AHI is actively intervening in policy development to steer the new privatised agricultural extension service. CDS and others in the Middle East and North Africa are working with water users associations. The south-south exchange through the WDM regional exchange facility is a good example of how decentralisation can be addressed and effective local management spread across the region. However, 'decentralisation' may have a much deeper purchase than this: as a response to declining public funds, as part of broader structural adjustment policies (which further deepens the

crisis of common property regimes), as a push for democratisation and a comprehensive withdrawal of the state. There are almost certainly significant implications for classic CB NRM projects here.

These and other external factors lead to the question of whether there is a need for some ‘foresight’ thinking within the PI – on issues such as globalisation and its potential impacts on trade policy and local markets, on the dynamics of rural-urban migration, on land tenure.

The link between urban and rural sectors might well be explored. The PLaW review towards the end of Phase 1 (Mackenzie and Spendjian, 1999) has already noted that in the case of water demand management, particularly in the Middle East, the distinction between urban and rural spheres is somewhat irrelevant. With higher rates of urbanisation than Africa (though here too the exodus from rural areas is increasing) water demand in the Middle East is split between irrigated agriculture and town needs. The two – as the WDM project clearly recognises – need to be addressed together. From a different perspective, there are strong indications that retail food markets in Nairobi are increasingly being concentrated through very large supermarkets – part of a broader global trend. The implications for the small-scale producers who have, until now, been the principle providers of Nairobi’s fresh products market are as yet unknown, but this is a very dynamic market. The smallholder banana producers who have benefited from PLaW’s interventions through their NARO and ISAAA partners will need to address the market chain not just from the perspective of transporting heavy perishable goods efficiently, but also from the perspective of supermarket demands for standardised bulk products.

East and Central African smallholder production has been founded on individual families, who have, or are, securing private tenure to their small farms. Production decisions are taken from the perspective of individual families and their land holdings. Current production strategies are based on family labour and indigenous knowledge systems, which favour household food security and provisioning local markets. The transition to a more collectivised bulk market/transport system to furnish Nairobi’s supermarkets may require concerted work on upstream (from production) technologies and organisation. PLaW’s potential role in this has yet to be fully elaborated. The capture of the flower trade market by big producers in East Africa is evidence of the potential ‘distress’ this might cause to small producers. Into this discussion can be added the future of the ‘fair trade’ system, the potential role of bio-technology (the Tissue Culture Banana project notwithstanding) and the prospective impact of the communications revolution (again, the ACACIA program shows IDRC’s readiness to embrace new futures).

Capacity building

A key feature of IDRC/PLaW support has been in building capacity within African and Middle Eastern research teams and institutions. Although no formal tracking of individuals who have benefited from IDRC support has been done, there is an abundance of evidence from projects and their host institutions that great progress has been made in this field.

Within NARO, long-term support through PLaW has resulted in 10 staff successfully receiving graduate or undergraduate training, 50 plus professional researchers benefiting from specialised training, particularly in developing social science and participatory skills alongside the pre-existing bio-physical technical expertise. South-south exchanges have materialised through the Isang Bagsak work. NARO staff now teach at Makerere University, where the Dean of the Agriculture Faculty (a former IDRC alumni) is radically restructuring the curriculum to integrate both social and physical science training amongst its undergraduates.

Interviews with staff of the Elangata Wuas, Environmental Management team (Nairobi), at CDS (Cairo), from the Crop-Livestock integration for sustainable natural resources management in the sub-humid and highland zones of West and Central Africa (Dakar), and from ISAAA (Nairobi) reveal that key social and participatory skills and concepts have become embedded within their research teams. Attitudes to, and ways of working with, communities have changed and become more progressive as a result.

Though still incomplete, the support for OSSREA in building a critical mass of African researchers with social, gender and stakeholder analytical skills is underway. This will provide a key resource for a wide range of African partners, NGOs and research teams in the future. With critical support from IDRC, ASARECA is emerging as a key East African research clearing house, brokering new projects and setting regional research agendas. IDRC has been instrumental in injecting multi-disciplinarity into ASARECA's research focus. It has also targeted gender aspects of agricultural research and this element of ASARECA's work is now actively supported by the CG system.

ECAPAPA is currently developing a range of MSc courses for African Universities. The course in Agricultural and Applied Economics contains key modules on NRM, Policy Analysis and Gender and Economic Development. The development of this new curriculum and its direction results from long-term support and guidance from PLaW. In addition, PLaW's current engagement with ECAPAPA is concentrating on two research and capacity building issues: gender and conflicts in natural resources management. Because of its regional compass within ASARECA, ECAPAPA is able to reach a wide constituency with these efforts.

In West Africa, WARF has worked with IDRC in developing outcome mapping and now spreads these methods across West Africa. It has also promoted participatory approaches, particularly within the region's NARs. Again this has resulted from specialised support and training through IDRC. The broadening of the skills base, to build a more holistic and systems view of CBNRM has also been promoted within such projects as Crop-Livestock Interactions and is now targeted at the CORAF irrigation work in the Senegal Valley.

In the Middle East, CDS has also benefited from training in PDC, which has enriched its approaches to participatory work. It has successfully applied these approaches in the Water Users Association project with the University of Minia (project 101018) and has injected concepts and practices in participatory research and planning into a range of Egyptian ministries.

These examples illustrate the steady impact of PLaW's capacity-building role, a key component of the PI's work. Progress in capacity building which focuses on a systems approach to researching NRM will always be protracted. Researchers trained in physical science can be reluctant to recognise the necessity of developing their social science skills when working with communities in the field. The switch from research station work, to working out on the farms – with farmers – is a difficult one. Through working to its objectives in supporting partners, PLaW POs have patiently encouraged and steered their partners towards these goals. Projects of this type are generally difficult to progress and

protracted in their development. Through maintaining long-term support, PLaW has been able to build capacity which fits well with the goal of sustainable development.

Conclusions

The PLaW PI's objectives are: (1) to understand the social and biophysical base of rural production systems, including factors leading to degradation and improvement; (2) to engage in policy and institution building in order to manage conflicts and promote equitable access to resources; and (3) to develop and use communication and information exchange strategies to further the above.

The PLaW PI emerged from pre-1992 Divisions: Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Science (AFNS), Health (H), Social Science (SS), Earth and Engineering Sciences (EE) and Communications (CD). At its inception in 1996 it focussed on three thematic strands from these divisions: Desertification, Dryland Water Management and Sustainable Production Systems and Policies. Its operations were conducted from four – later reduced to three regional centres in Africa and the Middle East: Johannesburg (ROSA), Nairobi (EARO – later ESARO), Dakar (WARO) and Cairo (MERO), with additional programming inputs from Ottawa.

At the outset, PLaW had to build a new PI from a scattered mix of inherited elements, through widely-separated regional offices and with a very broad thematic and regional mandate. It has subsequently evolved over 8 years into a team with a shared vision of its purpose and mode of operation. Multi/inter-disciplinary approaches to natural resource management, with a strong participatory element characterise the work with partners.

The work of the PLaW PI has been disrupted by a series of conditions and external events (program staff spread across four regional offices and Ottawa, the inheritance of three different programming streams strongly associated with these regional centres, the closure of the ROSA, loss of staff, changing guidance from the centre, and what appears to be a greater than average partner support load on the Nairobi office. Some of these are not unique to the PLaW PI.

During its two phases 1996-2000 and 2000-2004, the PLaW PI supported a range of partners who conducted research into NRM systems in three ecoregions: semi-arid lands, tropical highlands and sub-humid lands. All three objectives were addressed through these projects, with an emphasis on objective 1 during the first phase and on objectives 2 and 3 in the second.

Most key projects undergo a progressive shift in emphasis, from new production technology research, through a broader understanding of the social basis of production systems, to paying greater attention to the policy environment. IDRC/PLaW has had significant impact in building capacity with partners. This aspect is one of the PLaW's major achievements and has been strengthened by long-term support for partners. The question of the duration of support for any single partner has been raised. Two cycles have been suggested as a maximum. Whilst for NGOs, such a limit might seem appropriate, for permanent national institutions, where it is highly desirable to ensure that new approaches (multi-disciplinarity, gender and stakeholder analysis, participation and communication) are deeply embedded, longer term support may be warranted.

Work on policy and communication has gained prominence as the PI has evolved. This has been helped by encouraging partners to use the knowledge gained through their research to influence public policy towards resource use and access. Engagement with decision-makers has been promoted through a range of media and approaches: printed paper outputs (policy briefs, research results, edited books, etc.) through ICT (web-based materials, electronic networks), through advocacy in conferences, workshops and policy forums and through developing pioneering communications strategies (PDC).

Throughout its history, PLaW staff have acted upon renewed guidelines from the Ottawa, and from the suggestions of the end-of-Phase 1 evaluation. Efforts have been made to address a number of cross-cutting issues, such as conflict resolution (e.g. the water conflict work in Burkina Faso and the Trans-boundary Natural Resource Management Project in southern Africa), with gender issues and stakeholder analysis. Training and support projects have been funded to build on this emphasis. PLaW mentoring of projects and its active support of partners has been crucial to this evolution.

Projects and other support activities can usefully be divided into field and community-based production system research, networking and institutional development at a higher level and the RSPs, which can offer training support through workshops, and assist in ‘closing the loop’, through multi-stakeholder workshops and the generation of outputs (e.g. the crop-livestock interaction work in West Africa).

Although not immediately evident, there is a strong underlying coherence and a robust sense of direction to the programming and with the nature of projects that are supported. The perception that the PI lacks consistency and coherence can largely be attributed to insufficient communication between the regional offices and the centre. In this context, there has been little ‘show-casing’ of PLaW’s successes. The flat structure that characterised PLaW’s middle period is partly responsible for this gap in understanding.

On the substantive front, particularly with respect to cross-cutting issues, several themes could enhance the PI’s work. Whilst efforts have been made to address the **gender** question, responses (from POs and partners) to enquiries about gender were mixed. There is little doubt that it is an issue constantly referred to in discussions and documents, much as participation is, but there is still an uncertainty about how it may be best developed. This is as much an issue of conceptualisation as of the need for appropriate methodologies and ‘toolkits’.

There has been a clear effort to deal with **policy** issues, to look to closing the loop and scaling up. There are a number of successes to note in this regard (AHI, NARO, WMD, etc.). However, the possibility of a more concerted and structured approach to policy engagement could be considered. Whilst individual projects grapple with their own policy concerns, there is no consistent approach from PLaW. Developing capacity to map policy constituencies and their power relations and to find points of entry would assist relatively inexperienced partners such as the NMK in its EWEM project. Such analytical and capacity building support could be provided at a supra-project level (much as WARF and CDS provide participatory and training skills), which could enhance capacity and direction in this regard. Current efforts with ECAPAPA and perhaps OSSREA do not seem to fit this requirement.

Projects are active in disseminating their results and conclusions through multiple media. In most cases communities of interest/practice have been brought together (e.g. the AHI and the southern African Natural Resource Management network). Partner-to-community and community-to-community communications, (involving stakeholders both within and adjacent to communities) have been supported, particularly through the PDC work and through a range of workshops across the regions (CBNRM southern Africa, policy workshops in East Africa, the WDM forums). But at the program level, there appears to be no consistent format or output. After 8 years, there should be sufficient collective knowledge of working in the NRM field – at multiple levels and through different project arrangements (individual field-centred projects, networks, long-term NAR support through spread-out field sites, multiple configurations such as the AHI, etc.) – to identify common elements to do with research practice, policy issues, participation experience, etc. These might be captured in a series of outputs with a consistent style, tailored to suit specific audiences.

The PDC work has received attention and acclaim (the UN Round table on development communication in Rome, 2004) and has led to cross-project linkages in West Africa. It has also been successfully deployed through the Isang Bagsak model in East Africa and the Middle East, but there still appears to be a degree of uncertainty about its role in the PI. Although it is clearly directed at PLaW’s 3rd objective, its mode of operation hovers between, on the one hand, support as an additional element – complementary to ongoing projects (e.g. in support of the NARO banana work or in assisting in CDS’s capacity building); and on the other, being a project originator in its own right (e.g. some of the work in West Africa). In this latter mode, PDC projects can be developed around a specific resource management concern (as in the water use conflict resolution project in Burkina Faso). A clearer definition of the position of this work within the broader scope of PLaW’s PI would be useful.

South-south exchanges have been facilitated through the REF of the WDM program and across West Africa through an endogenous dynamic within the PDC stream. These types of south-south exchanges could usefully be encouraged, perhaps in a more deliberate and planned manner. The REF of WaDiMena is a good example of the possibilities. Synergies between existing projects could usefully be foci for such exchanges. Some of the PDC work has also facilitated these types of exchange. In this context, the idea of ‘champions’ (e.g. as emerged from the WDM forums in North Africa and the Middle East) could be expanded. OSSREA has so far not taken up this role, but such champions, located within **higher-level institutions**, may fulfil some of the support functions that currently overstretch PLaW’s POs. This would need to be clearly structured and contracted.

Whilst the search for efficiency and greater consistency in programming will be important in the future, there is a risk that over-concentrating on **big projects** with known and established partners will jeopardise prospects for innovation and capacity building in new teams. The program may become ‘stale’. This raises the question of the number of projects a PO is expected to support. In this regard, there has been some unevenness in the PLaW PI to date, although it is recognised here that there is never an exact equivalence in the management or mentoring needs for each project and that some are much more complex in their structure and remit than others. Nevertheless, support for ‘idiosyncratic’ initiatives should not be wholly abandoned in the search for efficiency, or in increasing the financial expenditure per PO. It can be the case that such ‘out-of-the-box’ ideas can pioneer new directions and cutting-edge innovation.

Moreover, in supporting big projects and big partners, situations may arise where supplementary funders, whose contribution can outweigh that of IDRC, may have greater sway over the evolution of projects. To a certain extent this is already becoming apparent with ASARECA, WDM, and possibly the AHL.

Greater attention to broad **external** factors and trends (e.g. resource privatisation, trade liberalisation and market integration, bio-technology) that impact on community-based work may be desirable. Time and resources would need to be devoted to this ‘foresight’ thinking, which can help to ensure that IDRC/PLaW remains at the cusp of innovation and progressive work. The work of the southern African NRM network (PLAAS/CASS), located within a new dynamic of land privatisation, demographic change and migration is, by its very nature, looking into the future to find political ‘space’ for its work. It may be that the academic environment in which these two lead institutes operate favours this broader awareness – more so than would be the case for NAR and NGO partners.

Annex 1 Acronyms

| | |
|-----------|--|
| ACACIA | Communities and Information Society in Africa |
| AHI | African Highlands Initiative |
| ASARECA | Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in East and Central Africa |
| CASS | Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe, Harare |
| CBNRM | Community Based Natural Resource Management |
| CBO | Community-Based Organization |
| CDS | Centre for Development Services, Cairo |
| CILSS | Centre inter-états de lutte contre la sécheresse au Sahel |
| CTL | Closing the loop |
| CORAF | West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development |
| ECAPAPA | East and Central Africa Program for Agricultural Policy Analysis |
| EARO | Ethiopian Agricultural Research Organization |
| ENRM | Environment and Natural Resource Management |
| EWEM | Elangata Wuas Environmental Management (Kenya) |
| ESARO | East and Southern Africa Regional Office |
| IARC | International Agricultural Research Centre |
| ICIPE | International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology |
| ICRAF | International Centre for Research in Agroforestry |
| ILRI | International Livestock Research Institute |
| INERA | Institute for Environment and Agricultural Research (Burkina Faso) |
| INRA | National Institute for Agricultural Research (Niger) |
| IRE | Institute for Rural Economics (Mali) |
| ISAAA | International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications |
| ISRA | Senegalese Institute for Agricultural Research |
| IUCN | International Union for the Conservation of Nature |
| KARI | Kawanda (Kenya) Agricultural Research Institute |
| MERO | Middle East Regional Office |
| NAADS | National Agricultural Advisory Service (Uganda) |
| NARO | National Agricultural Research Organization (Uganda) |
| NARS | National Agricultural Research Systems |
| NMK | National Museums of Kenya |
| OSSREA | Organization for Social Science and Economic Research in Eastern Africa |
| PDC | Participatory Development Communication |
| PLAAS | Program for Land and Agrarian Studies, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town |
| PLaW (PI) | IDRC's 'People, Land and Water' Program Initiative |
| PO | Program Officer |
| REF | Regional Exchange Facility |
| RELMA | Regional Land Management Unit |
| ROSA | Regional Office for Southern Africa |
| RO | Regional Office |
| Rx | External support funding |
| SED | Sustainable and Equitable Development |
| WARF | West African Rural Foundation |
| WARO | West African Regional Office |

Annex 2 persons interviewed

Edith Adera (Team Leader, ACACIA, Nairobi)
Guy Bessette (PLaW PO, Ottawa)
David Brooks (former Research Director PLaW, Ottawa)
Innocent Butare (PLaW PO, WARO)
Simon Carter (RPE Team Leader, Ottawa)
Ben Cousins (Program for Land and Agrarian Studies, University of Western Cape)
Renaud De Plaen (PLaW PO, Ottawa)
Fadel Diame (Director, West African Rural Foundation) and staff
Lamia El Fattal (PLaW PO, MERO)
Howard Elliott (Senior Technical Advisor, ASARECA)
Ahmed Farouk (Centre for Development Services, Cairo)
Connie Freeman (RD, IDRC, ESARO)
Lorra Thompson (Co-ordinator, Water Demand Management project/program, MERO)
Patrick Kahangire (Executive Director, Nile Basin Initiative)
Kevin Kelpin (IDRC Evaluation Unit, Ottawa)
Seyfu Ketema (Executive Secretary, ASARECA)
Jean Lebel (ENRM Director, Ottawa)
Wardie Leppan (SUB, former PLaW PO, Ottawa)
John Lynam (Rockefeller, Foundation, Nairobi)
Meshack Malo (NMK, Nairobi)
Joseph Mambo (Administrative Officer, IDRC, Nairobi)
Frank Matose (Program for Land and Agrarian Studies, University of Western Cape)
Isaac Minde (Co-ordinator, ECAPAPA)
Ali Mokhtar (Centre for Development Services, Cairo)
Regina Musaazi (Research Officer, NARO Entebbe)
Maureen Nakirunda (Research Officer, PLaW, Nairobi)
Otim Nape (Director General, NARO Entebbe)
Luis Navarro (Team Leader, PLaW)
Jacqueline Nyagahima (Program Assistant, RAIN, ASARECA)
Tom Ochuodho (NMK, Nairobi)
Fred Odera (Team Leader, EWEM; NMK, Nairobi)
Diana Okullo (Research Officer, NARO Entebbe)
Chin Ong (RELMA, Nairobi)
Zsofia Orosz (RO, PLaW, Ottawa)
Eglal Rached (RD, IDRC, MERO)
Mohamed Ahmed Ramzy (Centre for Development Services, Cairo)
Eva Rathgeber (former RD, IDRC, ESARO)
Ann Stroud (Co-ordinator, AHI)
Clesensio Tizakara (CGS-Research Manager, ASARECA)
Wilberforce Tushemerirwe (NARO, Kawanda)
Samuel Wakhusama (ASAAA, Nairobi)
Webster Whande (Program for Land and Agrarian Studies, University of Western Cape)

Jean Sibiri Zoundi (project manager Crop-Livestock integration for sustainable natural resources management in the Sahel, the sub-humid and highland zones of West and Central Africa)

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Annex 4 Staff Changes 1997-2004

| 1997 | Position | PLaW staff allocatio n (%) | PO - FTE |
|-----------------|----------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| David Brooks | 1 | 30 | 0.3 |
| Eva Rathgeber | 1 | 20 | 0.2 |
| Eglal Rached | 1 | 20 | 0.2 |
| Luis Navarro | 2 | 60 | 0.6 |
| Guy Bessette | 3 | 40 | 0.4 |
| Innocent Butare | 3 | 60 | 0.6 |
| Galil Elmekki | 3 | 30 | 0.3 |
| Naser Faruqui | 3 | 25 | 0.3 |
| Wardie Leppan | 3 | 45 | 0.5 |
| Don Peden | 3 | 50 | 0.5 |
| Maurice Saade | 3 | 65 | 0.7 |
| Ola Smith | 3 | 50 | 0.5 |
| James Schnuur | 4 | 35-40 | |
| TOTAL PO-FTE | | | 5.0 |

| 2000 | Position | PLaW staff allocatio n (%) | PO - FTE |
|-----------------|----------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| David Brooks | 1 | 20 | 0.2 |
| Eva Rathgeber | 1 | 15 | 0.2 |
| Eglal Rached | 1 | 10 | 0.1 |
| Luis Navarro | 2 | 80 | 0.8 |
| Guy Bessette | 3 | 40 | 0.4 |
| Innocent Butare | 3 | 60 | 0.6 |
| Dina Craissati | 3 | 30 | 0.3 |
| Jean Lebel | 3 | 20 | 0.2 |
| Wardie Leppan | 3 | 10 | 0.1 |
| Calvin Nhira | 3 | 40 | 0.4 |
| Don Peden | 3 | 10 | 0.1 |
| Ola Smith | 3 | 50 | 0.5 |
| | | | |
| TOTAL PO-FTE | | | 3.9 |

| 2002-2003 | Position | PLaW staff allocatio n (%) | PO - FTE |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Luis Navarro | 2 | 100 | 1.0 |
| Guy Bessette | 3 | 70 | 0.7 |
| Innocent Butare | 3 | 60 | 0.6 |
| Lamia El Fattal | 3 | 60 | 0.6 |
| Renaud de Plaen | 3 | 30 | 0.3 |
| Ola Smith | 3 | 60 | 0.6 |
| Zsofia Orosz | 4 | 50 | |
| TOTAL PO-FTE | | | 3.8 |

| 2003-2004 | Position | PLaW staff allocatio n (%) | PO - FTE |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Luis Navarro | 2 | 100 | 1.0 |
| Guy Bessette | 3 | 70 | 0.7 |
| Innocent Butare | 3 | 60 | 0.6 |
| Lamia El Fattal | 3 | 60 | 0.6 |
| Renaud de Plaen | 3 | 30 | 0.3 |
| Wachira Maina | 3 | 20 | 0.2 |
| Zsofia Orosz | 4 | 50 | |
| TOTAL PO-FTE | | | 3.4 |

| 2004-2005 | Position | PLaW staff allocatio n (%) | PO - FTE |
|------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Luis Navarro | 2 | 100 | 1.0 |
| Guy Bessette | 3 | 70 | 0.7 |
| Innocent Butare | 3 | 60 | 0.6 |
| Lamia El Fattal | 3 | 60 | 0.6 |
| Renaud de Plaen | 3 | 30 | 0.3 |

| | PO - FTE | % decline from 1997/8 |
|------------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| 1997-1998 | 5.0 | - |
| 2000-2001 | 3.9 | 22 |
| 2002-2003 | 3.8 | 23 |
| 2003-2004 | 3.4 | 32 |
| 2004-2005 | 3.2 | 36 |

| | | | |
|--------------|---|----|-----|
| Zsafia Orosz | 4 | 50 | |
| TOTAL PO-FTE | | | 3.2 |

key: 1 regional director or research director
 2 team leader and program officer
 3 program officer
 4 research officer

Source: PI staff lists and allocation percentage from Ottawa

Annex 5 Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for this evaluation are as follows:

1. Document the story of PLaW, from the perspective of key people who have participated in PLaW's work; a review of documentation to establish (a) what PLaW set out to do; (b) what happened i.e. results (outputs, outcomes, reach); contributions to CBNRM field; and (c) how it happened – i.e. PLaW's conceptual framework, approaches, strategies, learning, etc.
2. Taking into consideration PLaW's intentions, strategies and results, examine the internal coherence of the CBNRM approach adopted, focussing on how multi-disciplinarity has been achieved and its consistency across the programme.
3. Taking into consideration PLaW's intentions, strategies and results, analyse the extent to which the programme and its constituent projects are adapted to wider, external dynamics (economic, political, legal, demographic); and
4. Taking into consideration PLaW's intentions, strategies and results, document and assess the PI's outreach, focussing on dissemination and communication of results and the extent of policy engagement (and/or development) by programme staff and partners through their involvement with (but not limited to) development specialists, donors and government agencies and personnel.

Annex 6 Personal details (evaluator)

P.N. Bradley B.Sc. University of London, MA, PhD, Cantab

Address: Department of Geography
 Hull University
 Hull HU6 7RX

Telephone 01482-465343

Telefax 01482-466340

E-Mail p.n.bradley@geo.hull.ac.uk